

Texas law on Powerlines and Insulating links

Relevant law: Health & Safety Chapter 752 - High Voltage Overhead Lines

Act: Bill passed 1971, sponsored by Carl A. Parker and supported by Utilities. There have been some very minor amendments.

Background: Carl Parker started in Texas House of Representatives 1962 when 27 yrs old. He was in the House and Senate for 32 years and sponsored the complete 'Health and Safety' law - an extraordinary achievement. Chapter 752 addresses accidents from electrocutions.

Enforcement: No state agency was coded with authority to enforce 'Health and Safety' as that defaulted to the Texas Department on Labor and Standards. This department used to enforce 'Health and Safety' till it was merged with another department in 1989. The current view of the Office of the Attorney General is that it is a criminal violation with original jurisdiction of the county or district attorney, who can 'prosecute to full extent of law'. Private individuals however can initiate cases.

Excludes: grounded or de-energized or enclosed or less than 600-volt cables - 752.001

Exceptions: Building or maintenance of power or comms. Lines by 'authorised' linemen working **on the line.** - 752.002

Less than 6 ft: Must give utility 48 hrs notice and pay them **in advance** to de-energize or ground and set barriers. - 752.003

More than 10ft: Must use warning signs and cage guard and insulating links. - 752.006

Punishment: \$100-\$1000 fine & 0-1yr prison - 752.007

Liability: If powerline contact - total liability to utility - 752.008

Conclusion:

1. If you hit powerline it follows that you are working near a powerline hence should have an insulating link etc. You have broken state law, **1-year prison maximum**, and **totally liable to injured party** for any claim that may arise from them.
2. If you hit powerline it also follows you are less then 6 ft hence should have warned utility. You have broken state law and **totally liable to Utility** and any claim that may arise from them.
3. There is no distance mentioned where you **do not need** an insulating link etc.