

Teens Warned of Electricity Dangers

Western Power Distribution

Safety advisors at Western Power Distribution (WPD), the electricity distribution network operator for the Midlands, South Wales and South West, are heading back to school as part of a safety initiative to warn teenagers of the dangers of interfering with the electricity network.

A recent incident in Bream near Gloucester, where tree branches had been thrown at an overhead power line, has highlighted the importance of WPD's education programme. Although the power supply to nearly 800 customers was affected, the line wasn't brought down, which could have resulted in serious injury or even death.

WPD Distribution Manager for Gloucestershire, Neil James said: "Safety is our number one priority. Electricity can travel down a branch or stick and it can even jump gaps, so it is very important not to throw things at overhead power lines.

"The lines carry extremely high voltages and interfering with them in any way is potentially lethal. It can also put at risk the lives of our engineers who have to repair and replace them if they have been left in an unsafe condition. Similarly, other innocent people could become victims if the lines are brought down.

"It is also incredibly inconvenient for our customers if it causes a power cut – especially those who rely on electricity for things like dialysis machines."

As well as going into local schools to warn teenagers about the dangers of interfering with power lines, WPD has stepped up patrols in the area. Members of the public can help too – for if they see anything suspicious near power lines they should alert the police.

Note for newsdesks:

- Western Power Distribution (WPD) is the distribution network operator for the Midlands, South West England and South Wales, and is responsible for delivering electricity to approximately 7.7 million customers in the UK.
- WPD is not an electricity supply company and does not bill customers in the UK. Its responsibility is to distribute electricity from the point of generation to homes and businesses.

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