



July 24, 2009

I am writing this letter to share details of a serious electrical safety incident involving emergency responders. On Friday, July 17, 2009, a powered parachute ultra light aircraft became entangled in a power line. The first responders on site rescued the pilot while the power line was energized.

Despite the emergency responders' best intentions; they put themselves and the pilot at great risk by performing the rescue while the power line was energized. The consequences could have been extreme or even fatal.

It is important to note that SaskPower prioritizes our response to outages. Where there is potential for injury or serious incident related to an outage, we respond as soon as possible. Upon receipt of an emergency call, our personnel advise customers to remain clear to energized apparatus until we arrive.

When a SaskPower employee arrived on site, he proceeded to de-energize the line to make the area safe before untangling the aircraft. Our employee spoke with the emergency responders about the grave danger they had exposed themselves and the pilot to by approaching the aircraft. The emergency responders were not aware of the risk; however, the situation was quite serious. In the vast majority of cases, when a grounded object makes contact with another object caught in a power line, it creates a flow of electricity to the ground. The result is often serious injury or death.

The severity of this situation illustrates a need to communicate with first responders about working safely near electricity. We have also posted an electrical safety presentation to [http://www.saskpower.com/safety/tips/safety\\_info.shtml](http://www.saskpower.com/safety/tips/safety_info.shtml)

Please provide the information to emergency responders in your area. Our goal is to get the message out to as many first responders as possible so they can prepare for similar incidents in the future. The more we can educate emergency personnel about the dangers of electricity, the closer we will be to achieving our goal of preventing public electrical incidents.

Thank you for your assistance in sharing this safety information.

Glenda Barton  
Chief Safety Officer