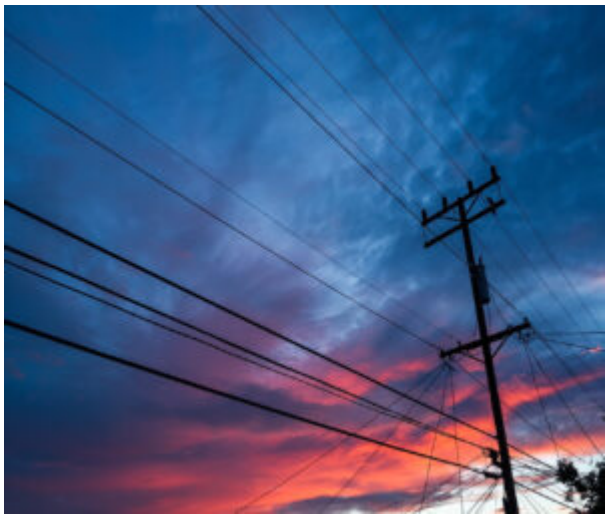
Inadequate Electrical Safety Training Zaps Contractor’s Due Diligence Defence



A street light subcontractor was fined a hair under $50K for failing to maintain the required minimum 3-metre clearance between the signal arm it was installing and overhead power lines. The subcontractor claimed due diligence but the Appeals Tribunal said no dice and upheld the penalty. This was a second offence and the subcontractor didn’t do much to bolster its OHS program in the 2 years since the first one. As an example, it pointed to the ‘Pre-Task Plan’ training handout which while identifying the hazards of working near live power lines, didn’t tell workers how to protect themselves (other than to warn them to ‘keep away’) [*WCAT Decision Number:* A1607090, Dec. 11, 2017].