



*Pictured at the launch of the new Farm Safety with Electricity booklet were, l-r - Donal Carey, IHFA; Simon Coveney, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine & Tom Ryan, Teagasc Farm Building Specialist.*

Stray electricity can also pose a significant risk which impacts on livestock performance and farm incomes as it leads to reduced liveweight gain in cattle, reduced milk yield, higher cell counts and increased levels of mastitis.

Farm safety was a major theme of the ESB Networks stand at the National Ploughing Championships

Farm safety is a huge issue right now and no stone can be left unturned in the effort to prevent injury and keep everyone safe. There are many hazards on farms but with a renewed sense of care and attention, these risks can be minimised. Electricity is one of these hazards which farmers must always be conscious of.

There have been 68 deaths from electrocution due to accidental contact with 'live' electricity between 1995 and 2014. Avoid harm and take the necessary steps to always Farm Safely with Electricity.

Working near overhead power lines and having an unsafe electrical installation are the main causes of electrical accidents and fatalities on farms. Forage harvesters, combine harvesters, tipping trailers, and moving high loads where there are overhead power lines are major risks. Typical farm machinery can easily reach an overhead power line so always make sure to keep well clear of overhead wires and never cause damage to poles, stay-wires and protective earth wires (attached to poles) during farming work.

Aside from fatalities, electrical accidents result in severe injuries from burns, shocks and fires, as well as leading to many other hardships such as long term loss of income, losses arising from livestock deaths and damage to farm buildings due to fire.

last September with the launch of ESB Networks' new safety booklet, Farm Safety with Electricity –It Makes Sense to Check, by Simon Coveney, T.D, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Minister Coveney said it was about “de-risking farming and fields, and the way in which farmers interact with machinery, when they are wiring, replacing cables, or adding to existing cables”.

He went on to say that, “It is important for every representative organisation and body involved in farming to continually highlight the need for farmers to think Safety First in all tasks they perform, no matter the pressure. Simple behavioural changes are all that it takes to save lives. I would strongly encourage all people involved in farming to read the booklet and to work through the safety checklist and self-rating at the end”.

The ESB Networks booklet was developed and issued nationally to raise awareness of the potential hazards of electricity on farms, and to promote farm safety. It contains information about the risks involved with electricity, what to watch out for on the farm, what to do in the event of an electrical accident, and how to complete the Safety Checklist for your farm.