

Connections

Marlborough Lines Newsletter • Summer 2015

Marlborough
Lines

Headlines

Sharing of investment success

The shares of Marlborough Lines are held by the Marlborough Electric Power Trust (MEPT) and the beneficiaries of the Trust are the electricity consumers of today and the future.

As a consequence of MEPT ownership of Marlborough Lines, the Trust has made a tax-free capital distribution to all those connected to the Marlborough electricity network via electricity retailers.

The MEPT has determined that the payment will be allocated on the basis of \$50 to every network connection and this amount will be credited to your electricity account in December.

Going forward it can be expected distributions to electricity consumers will further increase as customers share in the investment success of Marlborough Lines.

This distribution is in addition to the discount paid to all consumers¹ in March of each year. It is expected that a typical domestic consumer² will receive a discount in March 2016 of \$226.38.

¹ All installations connected to the network excluding those in uneconomic areas.

² As defined by the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment.

Reliability of supply

We recognise in today's environment our customers are increasingly dependent upon reliability of their electricity supply and we work hard to achieve it.

Our approach is always to seek to eliminate potential faults before they occur and disrupt electricity supply.

Our ongoing tree and vegetation management programme has played a major part in maintaining the reliability of supply, together with ongoing surveillance of the network, the installation of remotely operated circuit breakers and control equipment.

We have also continued our investment within the network on an ongoing basis both in terms of capital and maintenance expenditure.

By way of example this year we have completed the entire replacement of an old 33kV line built in the mid-1940s from Blenheim through to Rai Valley, have undertaken the replacement of a further 4km of the original Waihopai 33kV line built in 1926 and installed new switchgear at the Riverlands Substation.

It is also intended that the capacity of the Ward substation be increased with the installation of two new 33/11kV 5MVA transformers.

As part of being proactive in relation to maximising the reliability of supply we appreciate customer feedback.

Accordingly should you have any concerns with any aspect of your electricity supply please do not hesitate to give us a call.



Waihopai line rebuild, before and after.

Safety around electricity



Electricity systems properly installed and used are entirely safe. But the converse is true. Inadequate wiring, inappropriate use of electricity, and the failure to observe proper clearances from live lines all have the potential to result in the loss of life or injury. Tragically such has occurred in Marlborough.

It is for this reason that from time to time we include the topic of safety in our newsletters.

Over a period of years we have had to deal with various tragedies. In every instance mistakes have been made relative to electricity. For our part we will do our utmost to ensure everyone is safe relative to our lines, network assets and our delivery of electricity. But achieving electrical safety is something that we have to do in partnership with our community. The following information is provided in relation to a variety of aspects pertaining to electricity supply – all of which have resulted in serious injury or fatalities. Accordingly we ask that you please give this information your consideration and discuss these matters with members of your family.

Extension cords

Only use cords that are electrically safe, i.e. those:

- That do not have the conductors exposed at the cap or the plug or along any part of the cord.
- Where the current rating of the cord exceeds or matches the electrical load of the appliance connected to it.

Do not connect electricity supply to caravans via an ordinary three pin plug – this can be exceedingly dangerous.

Use of appliances

Do not use appliances in wet, damp or outside conditions without the use of an earth leakage circuit breaker or an isolating transformer.

Even if your appliance is double insulated it is important to recognise the cord can present a danger and hence the use of an earth leakage circuit breaker or isolating transformer is warranted.

Switch and socket outlets

If you have switches or sockets in your installation which are cracked or broken please have them replaced. The same applies to the three pin sockets if the socket pins do not firmly grip the plug. Where this occurs typically the metal pins are fatigued. A loose connection can result in heating and in the worst case, fire can result. If you have any doubts please call your electrician or us.

Wiring

All wiring in any installation should be adequately protected and safely installed. If you have any doubts please have it inspected by an electrician or give us a call.

Fuses

If your electrical installation is protected by rewirable fuses please ensure that any rewirable fuse is replaced with fuse wire of the appropriate rating, i.e. 5 amp, 10 amp etc.

Please be aware the fuses are not intended to protect the user of electricity but the wiring within the installation.

Earth leakage circuit breakers

Unlike fuses or over current circuit breakers, earth leakage circuit breakers protect the user. Earth leakage circuit breakers have the ability to detect tiny currents to earth and switch off supply instantly before harm can occur. They are very reliable and keep the users of electricity safe in all conditions.

In recent years earth leakage circuit breakers have been fitted to the switchboards of all new domestic installations. Earth leakage circuit breakers eliminate the need for the use of an isolating transformer and are thus very convenient.

If your switchboard has not been fitted with an earth leakage circuit breaker its installation will enhance your safety.



Service lines

The overhead line from the pole fuse to your installation is your responsibility. If it is in a state of disrepair or the terminal box on your installation appears to be loose or damaged please call your electrician or us.



Service cables

A number of installations are supplied by underground cables. Please ensure when landscaping the ground cover over these cables is not reduced to less than 600mm. Equally, it is important to know the location of buried power cables on your property prior to excavation or driving metal stakes.

Should you have any doubts as to the location of buried cables on your property please give us a call. The precise location of a cable may save a life.

Trees and power lines

Trees in close proximity to power lines can pose a danger to children climbing them. Alternatively should trees contact live power lines they can cause interruption to your supply, sometimes discernable by flickering of lights or in the worst case cause a fire.

If trees are in close proximity to your service line (0.5m or less) they need to be cut or trimmed or the line rerouted or placed underground. Please note that trees should not be cut in the proximity of live lines. Should you have a tree close to your service line please call us to have the supply disconnected before the trimming work starts.

Alternatively call your qualified contractor or give us a call if you require assistance.

Just as trees can provide interference with service lines, the same can apply to the lines which are utilised to deliver electricity to our customers. Although we undertake regular surveillance of all lines relative to the interference by trees and vegetation, you can assist us in this regard by advising of any tree which is in close proximity to our lines. Your advice will assist us to maximise the reliability of your supply and minimise the risk of fire.

Use of equipment in the vicinity of lines and cables

Unfortunately a number of persons have been subject to harm through ignoring the proximity of overhead lines or underground cables and making contact with them. If you need to work in the vicinity of power lines or cables please be aware proper procedures need to be followed and equipment normally needs to be kept 4.0 metres from live overhead power lines. Irrigators, diggers, trucks and other items of plant have all come in contact with power lines to the detriment of users or people in the vicinity.

Our preference is always to assist prior to the commencement of work not after a problem has occurred. So please don't hesitate to give us a call.

Painting near power lines

If you are about to paint your house or any other buildings and power lines are in the vicinity please do not take any unnecessary risks.

Please contact us to arrange for your electricity supply to be isolated so that live lines are not a danger.

Regrettably on occasions the danger of painting in the vicinity of live lines has been overlooked and there have been tragic consequences as a result.

Low power lines

If you come across an accident where power lines are in close proximity to the ground or are on the ground please treat them as alive. Power lines that appear to be dead can be live or automatically livened at any time. Making contact with the lines or even standing on the ground in close proximity to lines on the ground can result in electrocution.

The safety of our network

Within Marlborough Lines we undertake regular surveillance of our network to ensure that it is safe but if at any time you see any damage to any line, cable box or any part of our electricity system please do not hesitate to give us a call. For our part we do not want to expose members of the public to the dangers of electricity.



A message to yachties

Before you erect your mast or when you move your yacht on land please check to ensure there are no power lines in the vicinity. Sadly some people have not, with dire consequences.

And our final message about safety...

We are totally committed to providing you with a safe and reliable electricity supply. Should you have concerns in relation to any aspect relative to electricity either within your installation, service line or cable or any part of our network or operations please do not hesitate to give us a call. We will be pleased to help.

For any problems with your electricity supply, call our 24 hour fault line: (03) 577 7007



Community

Illumination of Pollard Park

Within Marlborough we are indeed fortunate to be able to enjoy the very attractive plantings within Pollard Park which is carefully maintained by the Marlborough District Council.

In recognition of the 80th anniversary of the establishment of Marlborough Lines' predecessor in 2003 Marlborough Lines undertook the illumination of the trees within Pollard Park.

The Company has continued to do this and each year ensures that the lighting is available for members of the public.

Accordingly you may wish to take the opportunity of viewing the wonderful spectacle of Pollard Park by night.



Kinetic sculpture and native planting

At Marlborough Lines we believe we have greater responsibility to our community than just the supply of electricity.

It is for this reason the kinetic sculpture and planting was undertaken on the Company's property adjacent to the river in Sinclair Street.

Recently the Company received an award from Garden Marlborough for the planting undertaken to this area and whilst Marlborough Lines was pleased to receive this award, our greatest satisfaction is in providing another amenity for the people of Marlborough to enjoy.

Sponsorship

Marlborough Lines is an integral part of the community it serves and provides sponsorship for a number of community events. Apart from its ongoing sponsorship of Stadium 2000, Marlborough Lines is also a sponsor of the Blenheim and Picton Christmas Parades, Carols by Laserlight in Blenheim, the Picton Maritime Festival, and the Marlborough Lines Tertiary Study Awards for Marlborough's high academic achievers.

We encourage you to visit our website anytime to find out more about Marlborough Lines and the work we do.

www.marlboroughlines.co.nz



We wish everyone a very happy Christmas and all the very best for 2016.

As always it is our intent to provide you with a reliable supply of electricity over the festive season but should you experience any problems with your electricity supply please give us a call. We are available 24/7 on phone 03 577 7007.

