



# Keys to the Utility Work Protection Code

IHSA's eLearning course highlights important concepts for non-utility trades

In Ontario, a strict set of rules governs work that takes place in and around high-voltage electrical plants. The Electrical Utility Safety Rules (EUSR) tell workers how to act when they are near potentially hazardous conditions, while the Utility Work Protection Code (UWPC) helps create an environment where those hazards are reduced or eliminated. This is achieved by adhering to rules and procedures that make it clear when electrical lines are isolated.

The UWPC uses an extensive system of permits and tags to show when it is safe to work on lines or equipment. Anyone who issues these permits—as well as anyone who conducts the work—is required to have specific knowledge of the conditions for work set out by the UWPC. They must also be certified through training.

IHSA has long provided in-depth training programs for people who work under the Code and for those who issue its permits. These courses work through numerous scenarios and examine highly specific details related to utility work. It is specialized knowledge for a specialized job.

## A useful overview

It can be useful for non-electrical workers who may conduct work near electrical equipment, encroaching on the safe limits of approach, to have a general understanding of the Code. For those workers, such as arborists and civil contractors, IHSA now offers a Utility Work Protection Code Overview eLearning course. The online, on-demand program is designed to help participants recognize the restrictions of the Code and its tags and forms, and identify the various authorities that are responsible for the application of the Code.

In other words, though your job may not require you to be UWPC-certified, IHSA's overview provides you with knowledge of the Code to help you work more safely.

“The UWPC Overview focuses on what workers need to know in the field—their responsibilities as workers, how to recognize each work permit tag, and what it means when you see one,” says Sandra Morrison, IHSA's UWPC Coordinator. “Engineering and group support staff, arborists, and civil workers can relate more to the overview, and they can use that knowledge to create a safe area for work.”



## Sign up

IHSA's Utility Work Protection Code Overview eLearning course can be purchased on an individual basis, or for multiple workers in an organization. Register for the online training, plus dozens of other programs:

[ihsa.ca/elearning](https://ihsa.ca/elearning)

While most utilities require these work groups to be Code-qualified, Morrison says much of the content of more extensive UWPC training isn't relevant to the work done by non-electrical workers. This makes it more challenging for them to pass such courses. The eLearning overview course provides information that is more relevant to non-electrical workers without the requirement of full certification.

“When paired with their company's individual assessment of competency, the UWPC Overview training can be of greater value to non-electrical workers,” Morrison says.