

POLE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Delivering western Victoria a stronger, safer, more resilient power network

Powercor is more than doubling the number of poles being replaced or reinforced to better protect the electricity network and customers from the impacts of more frequent extreme weather.

Project Outcomes

Powercor, will roll out a program to replace or reinforce at least 34,650 poles over the next 5 years, meaning approximately 7000 per year, and marking a 65% increase and a significant shift in how network safety is proactively managed.

The planning for the program is informed by a leading-edge asset management approach which takes into consideration factors including the type of wood, their age, and prevailing weather conditions at their location.

Background

The Powercor network supplies power to over 840,000 homes and businesses across western Victoria. This network is made up of almost 90,000 kilometres of wires and more than 588,000 poles and associated infrastructure.

As is the case in power networks across Australia, the majority power poles are wood poles. These poles are closely monitored and replaced or reinforced when required.

In the vast majority of situations these poles remain strong and safe for decades.

Over the past three years, Powercor has been changing how we inspect and manage our pole network and have been increasing the number of poles we replace or reinforce.

In light of recent severe storms and the likelihood of more frequent and extreme weather events Powercor will now be taking an even more precautionary approach to how we are managing our poles.

As part of this program older wood poles will be replaced with new hardwood, concrete or steel poles. The material of each pole will be selected depending on a range of factors including climate and fire risk.



Areas of work

The following regions are scheduled to have pole replacement activity as part of this program.

Region	
1	Ardeer
2	Ballarat
3	Bendigo
4	Cobram
5	Colac
6	Echuca
7	Geelong
8	Horsham
9	Kyneton
10	Maryborough
11	Mildura
12	Shepparton
13	Warrnambool

Safety and reliability for the long term

The safety of our communities is our highest priority.

Under this program, our planning takes an even more proactive and cautious approach to replacing poles to ensure we support safety and reliability objectives and over time, reduce the average age of our assets.

This is a responsible approach to managing a large network which includes areas at high risk of bushfires or the impacts of extreme weather events.

Bushfire mitigation

Powercor works year-round to make sure the network is strong and stable ahead of the bushfire season.

In addition to the significant increase in our pole replacement program Powercor has added 18 REFCLs to the network

These devices effectively act as a big safety switches for the network which immediately cut power when they detect a fault in the line which could cause a fire.

Our policies are in addition to the strict regulatory standards that are in place across the state and which were extensively reviewed as part of the 2009 Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission (VBRC) and the subsequent Grimes Review.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PROJECT PLEASE SCAN THIS QR CODE OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE

About Powercor

Powercor moves electricity to and from more than 843,000 homes and businesses across the western suburbs of Melbourne and through central and western Victoria to the South Australian and New South Wales borders.

Our network is made up of almost 90,000 kilometres of wires and more than 588,000 poles and associated infrastructure, and supports 11,200 medium, commercial, and industrial businesses and 106,500 small businesses.

We are at the forefront of finding innovative ways to support Victoria's energy transition through projects and trials investigating community batteries, smart charging for electric vehicles, and microgrids and other community energy projects.

Our teams operate from 13 depots, our Bendigo-based customer contact centre and our CBD headquarters, to deliver reliable, safe and affordable electricity by operating, managing and maintaining all network assets and metering services. This means managing a network that is reliable and safe, particularly in relation to bushfire risks.