Working safely on billboards near powerlines

Working near powerlines can be fatal. Touching them or straying into the exclusion zone around them can result in a serious electric shock.
If you must work near powerlines, you should follow these three steps:

1. **Develop a safe system of work before you start**
   - Identify overhead and underground powerlines by consulting maps and/or talking to the property owner and electrical entity.
   - Conduct a site specific risk assessment – think about the type of plant and equipment/tools used, nature and size of loads being moved, site and weather conditions, type of work being done, set-up and pack-up procedures.
   - Put risk controls in place – the most effective way of controlling the risk is to de-energise the line for the duration of work where there is a risk of contact.
   - Use good design principles and well maintained platforms and sail tracks to keep workers and contractors protected, and equipment out of exclusion zones.

2. **Keep your workers and contractors informed about electrical safety**
   - Induct and train your workers and contractors in safe work procedures, emergency procedures, and exclusion zones (*Figure 1*).
   - Carefully plan the tasks to be completed near powerlines and work away from them whenever possible, not underneath them.

3. **Avoid going into exclusion zones**
   - Make powerlines and poles visible. Ask your electrical entity for permission to paint power poles and/or have them install markers or flags on the powerlines.
   - If a billboard is in close proximity to overhead powerlines, work with the electrical entity to move lines away.
   - Where possible, use insulated or non-conductive tools and equipment.
   - Make sure the end of any equipment/tool being used is well clear of the exclusion zone.
   - Install warning signs at the top of the billboard to remind workers and contractors of the proximity of powerlines.
   - Follow the safety advice you are given by the electrical entity.

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*Figure 1.*

*Figure 2.*