

# LANARK HYDROS PUBLIC SAFETY FACTSHEET

## Overview

The Falls of Clyde is celebrated as a place of outstanding beauty and attracts tens of thousands of visitors each year.

At ScottishPower Energy Wholesale, we want you to enjoy the spectacle of the Clyde's waterfalls – but to do it safely.

The area around the Lanark Hydros has a number of potential hazards, including fast-flowing water and the steep-sided gorge carved by the River Clyde. By keeping to marked footpaths and observing warning signs, you will ensure you stay safe at the Falls of Clyde.



## Be Aware of Water Dangers at the Falls of Clyde

The Lanark hydro-electric scheme has been generating clean, sustainable power from the River Clyde since it was commissioned in the 1920s.

Its two stations, Bonnington and Stonebyres, work by extracting an agreed amount of the river's water to power their turbines and generate electricity. Water level is built-up behind the stations' tilting weir gates and diverted through the tunnel intake screens.

Any excess water that does not go through the power station spills over the weir gates. When the river is in spate the weir gates roll over and the floodwater passes down the natural river bed. Swimming or boating near the weir gates is highly dangerous. Sadly, drowning remains a major cause of accidental death – and most (66%) occur at inland water sites, such as rivers and reservoirs.

The latest available UK figures, compiled by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and the Royal Life Saving Society, show that around 405 deaths in 2009 could be attributed to accidental drowning, with 59 fatalities among the under 19s. Some 53% of accidental drownings occurred at inland water sites, such as rivers and reservoirs.

The power station at Bonnington is controlled remotely by operators at Stonebyres Power Station, several kilometres away. Power stations will start and stop generating without warning. This can result in large changes in water flows at both the weir and the power station, which could put you in danger if you were standing near the water's edge. The fast-flowing water creates turbulence and strong currents that could very quickly pull a person – or a pet – under water.

Prolonged heavy rainfall at any season can also result in a rise in river level and turn the Clyde into raging white water. In such conditions, flooding can occur at the footpath and boardwalk along its east bank, resulting in sections being closed to the public. Warning notices and temporary barriers should be closely observed.

In the coldest of winters, ice can form on the river. Due to the constantly moving currents, the surface ice is thin and cannot support the weight of a person or a pet and must be avoided for safety's sake.

Recreational uses of the Clyde include fishing downstream of the falls and canoeing. The gorge below Bonnington Linn has been classified as a Grade IV run with a Grade V hole near Wallace's Cave, 100m from the top of Corra Linn. Canoeists should be fully aware of the potential hazards of this stretch and swimming near the top of the waterfalls is potentially deadly.

The sport of tombstoning, where thrillseekers jump from cliffs or bridges into water, is very dangerous at the Falls of Clyde as the water's depth and speed of current can change rapidly. If you are outside, near water – be aware of the dangers.

## The River Gorge

The River Clyde has, over countless years, carved out a deep gorge – with a series of spectacular waterfalls as the river drops around 60 metres over a distance of 1.8 kilometres.

At Corra Linn, the highest of the falls, the river tumbles 27 metres. In places the gorge is 50m deep while the 1km section from Bonnington Linn to Corra Linn has near-vertical walls 25m high dropping to a bouldery river bed.

A risk assessment by Scottish Natural Heritage concludes there is a 'medium risk' of death or serious injury caused by someone falling or slipping at the gorge.

Walkers should stay on marked footpaths at all times in the vicinity of the edge of the ravine.

Children should be carefully supervised and dogs must be kept on leads to ensure their safety.

A safe viewing area allows good views of Corra Linn. Under no circumstances should the barriers in place be crossed.



*The pipes feeding Bonnington Power Station and Corra Linn, the highest of the Falls of Clyde*

# GALLOWAY HYDROS PUBLIC SAFETY FACTSHEET

## Don't Mess with Electricity

Electricity is essential for modern day life. But it is also a very powerful force that can kill if you do not treat it with respect.

Each year many people suffer tragic accidents involving electricity from overhead lines and substations.

Electricity can jump large distances from exposed highvoltage electricity wires or conductors – so stay safe and keep your distance.

The Galloway hydro-electric scheme is served by electricity substations at Tongland, Glenlee, Kendoon, Earlstoun and Carsfad that step up the electricity output from the power stations to 132,000 volts.

The substations are protected by a high security fence to keep out people. Never attempt to retrieve an item, such as a ball, from a substation.

Meanwhile, a system of overhead power lines transmits power across the region. Most electricity lines are uninsulated and if contact – or even near contact – is made it can result in a serious shock. So always look around before starting any activity – such as fishing, canoeing or erecting tents – and move away if there is a danger of accidental contact. For more information on electrical safety, including posters and a link to ScottishPower's Powerwise site for kids, visit: [www.powerwise.org.uk](http://www.powerwise.org.uk)



## Do's and Don'ts

DO keep away from overhead power lines and substations

DON'T climb electricity pylons, electricity poles or trees near power lines

DO obey warning notices on electrical equipment

DON'T enter a substation – even to retrieve a ball

DO inform ScottishPower if electrical equipment looks damaged

DON'T fly kites or use fishing rods close to power lines

DO a visual safety check for overhead lines before starting any activity

DON'T throw things at electrical wires or equipment

## Protecting Visitors at the Falls of Clyde

The Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT) manages the 59-hectare Falls of Clyde National Nature Reserve (NNR) in association with ScottishPower and the Corehouse Estate. Since 2001, ScottishPower has sponsored a seasonal ranger to support the work of the SWT at Lanark, particularly reinforcing public safety at the steep gorge and along the River Clyde. Each year, the reserve welcomes up to 70,000 visitors and the SWT organises a programme of summer activities and walks.

The duties of the 'Power Ranger' include liaising with the public, providing visitors with information about the site's history, wildlife and current status of the power stations. The SWT has provided a network of signposted footpaths and boardwalks to help ensure the safety of visitors, along with benches and interpretation boards.

The Falls of Clyde is also the end point of the Clyde Walkway, a 65km long-distance footpath that connects Glasgow to Lanark. For more details about the environment at the Lanark Hydros, see our Lanark Hydros Environmental Factsheet.



*Bonnington Linn, one of the Falls of Clyde*

## More Advice on Safety at Lanark

Hydro Power is important to you – and your safety is very important to us. For more information about water safety, including advice for children and young people, visit RoSPA's website at: [www.rospa.com/leisuresafety/adviceandinformation/watersafety/default.aspx](http://www.rospa.com/leisuresafety/adviceandinformation/watersafety/default.aspx)

The Galloway and Lanark Hydros have produced a DVD that focuses on public safety at its sites as part of a Schools Education Initiative. The disc has been distributed to many schools in Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire and Lanark. The DVD is available to other schools and youth groups free of charge. To request a copy, email us at: [visit.hydros@scottishpower.com](mailto:visit.hydros@scottishpower.com)

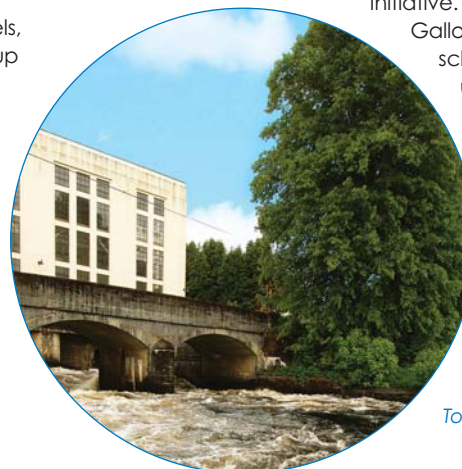
The Galloway and Lanark Hydros also reinforce public safety messages to schoolchildren through the Tongland Tour. Each year nearly 400 Pupils from local schools are shown around ScottishPowers Tongland Power Station (near Kirkudbright) and given advice on issues such as energy production, environment and the dangers posed by water and electricity.

Other groups can apply to visit Tongland Visitor Centre by emailing us at the address above.

## An Active Working Site

Six stations, eight dams, plus tunnels, aqueducts and pipelines make up the Galloway Hydros.

Members of the public are reminded that these are part of an active working power station with inherent risks such as heavy plant movements. No-one should enter a station compound or dam structure without permission. Station staff can advise on access issues, as necessary.



*Tongland Power Station*