



SAFETY ALERT

BUUK
infrastructure

BK-HAS-SA-0192-Vn1.00

TITLE: UTILITY STRIKE - EARTHING ELECTRODE DRIVEN THROUGH LIVE LV CABLE

Date: 04th July 2024

The Incident:

On Wednesday 26th June 2024 an operative working on behalf of Power On struck a live LV mains cable causing a release of energy. The cable was buried approximately 600mm below ground, preventing the operative from being exposed to energy release or associated flashover.

What happened?

The jointing team were undertaking the installation of an external substation earthing system, where the operative was using an approved BOSCH GSH Hammer drill to drive in the earth electrodes into the ground.

Whilst installing the second electrode, the operative felt some resistance, and made the decision to apply additional pressure to the drill, at which point he saw smoke emanating from the trench, works were halted immediately and subsequently the site manager reported a loss of supply to the development.

Statutory drawings and diagrams were not issued with the job pack, the presence of the cable was not identified as part of the Point of Work Risk Assessment and the CAT survey conducted by the team could not locate the cable prior to the commencement of the works.

What was the outcome?

As a result of the depth of the cable and the use of insulated equipment during the activity, fortunately in this instance, no injuries were sustained.

Key Messages

- ✓ **Ensure the completion of a suitable and sufficient Point of Work Risk Assessment (POWRA) prior to any activities starting.**
- ✓ **Carry out work activities in accordance with the approved safe systems of work.**
- ✓ **Comply with the principles of HSG47 - Avoiding danger from underground services.**
- ✓ **Always work safely and escalate any activity-related queries to your line manager.**

Additional Information/Pictures/ Further Reading



Employee Assistance Programme is available to all BUUK employees free of charge, 365 days a year.



<https://wisdom.healthassured.org/login>
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