



HIGH VOLTAGE CABLE STRIKE

OVERVIEW

An incident occurred on 14th August 2024 when a High Voltage cable was struck during excavation works. The cable was positioned beneath a lean concrete mix and was struck when a breaker attachment was used during the digging activity.

DETAIL

A Powercare excavation team was tasked with excavating a 132kV EHV cable joint bay.

Initially, the team marked the existing utility services on a slabbed area. However, these markings did not extend beyond the planned excavation zone or include encroachment lines. This was contrary to the DSR 01 014a Digging Card requirements, which mandates that all markings extend 300mm beyond the excavation boundaries.

Upon removing the slabs, the team neglected to re-mark the utility positions and encroachment lines. As they began to excavate, the team encountered a lean concrete mix layer and decided to break up this layer using a “pecker” breaker attachment on the 1.5 tonne excavator.

During this process, the breaker struck a high-voltage cable that was approximately 150mm below the lean concrete mix. Fortunately, nobody was injured, and a serious investigation is underway to determine the root causes.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- Along with plans, use a CAT & GENNY to scan the area for buried utilities.
- Mark out the buried utilities and ensure all marks extend at least 300mm beyond the excavation zone. Take a photograph of the markings and save it to the job.
- Hand dig trial holes to confirm utility depths. Take a photograph of the hand dug trial hole and save it to the job.
- DO NOT use mechanical excavators within 300mm of a known utility.
- If utility and encroachment markings are disturbed, covered or removed, all work shall stop, and the markings be reapplied.
- Refer to DSR 01 014 and HSG 47 for more information on safe digging techniques.



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Primary communication via Line Manager complete by (X)	x	1 week		2 weeks		1 month
Additional communication (X)		Learning points	x	1 st 15		Team Brief slide
Line management must ensure appropriate employees understand the content of this document within the timescale shown. This document is subject to compliance audits after the communication deadline.						