



## Young Child Falls into Excavation Adjacent Garden Pathway

At around 6.30pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2017 a young child (3 years old) whilst accessing the front door to the house fell from the door step and into a barriered excavation. The child sustained minor facial injuries which required medical treatment.

The excavation was required to allow the service cable to be cut to isolate the service position for the replacement of an obsolete service cut out.

This work had been identified following a loss of supply associated with a metering problem.

The service cut out replacement had been completed on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November and the excavation was awaiting reinstatement.

A barrier demarcation zone was in position and being checked daily with follow-up reinstatement scheduled within the contract SLA however this incident could have been avoided.

Actions of staff who responded are commended but the incident could have been much more serious and the following actions noted to prevent a similar incident.



## Recommendations and Action Learning Points

- Prior to excavation within a customer's property, discussion is required with homeowners to assess any risk the excavation location presents, along with the control measures needed to reduce/remove any hazards.
- Particular attention should be made to the access/egress to the property and to consider the potential risks, especially where there are known vulnerabilities, or young children who live or may visit the property. These requirements and the control measures should be recorded on the site specific risk assessment.
- Based on the above risk assessment, arrangements should be made to plan jointing and backfill on the same day.
- Walk boards should be installed over the excavation in addition to barriers for added protection around excavations in private gardens and properties.