



Wall Collapses into Excavation

Two serious Near Misses as described by Ayrshire jointing staff (Stuart McBain and Angus Brown)

“An SPD digging team excavated to allow me to disconnect the pillar and replace with a footpath link box, however whilst I was working in the excavation the pillar became unstable and fell over slightly, with the open live contacts nearly trapped me. Immediately we made the area safe and contacted our Team Leader and raised a near miss.

The following day we were prepping site to carry out the Jointing works. Whilst in the trench we heard a rumbling and we both moved quickly to the end of the trench. Within a blink of an eye the wall collapsed. Neither us, nor the digging team had recorded the wall as a potential hazard.

After the incident it was identified that a Team Leader had observed a crack on the front of the wall prior to its collapse. Whether this was caused by the excavation works is unknown.

We both consider ourselves-lucky not to have been hurt with these incidents.”

There had been similar incidents to this in the past and recently [EXP-10-334](#) Incident: Wall Collapse, Garford Road, Rhyl was identical to this incident where one of the recommendation was **Prior to starting work, check for any signs of damage or distress and even if the structure looks in good condition, document your findings onto your START assessment**



Recommendations and action points

- When an open excavation site will be directly against buildings, walls or other structures a competent person must always carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment prior to any work commencing.
- When completing a Risk Assessment where there has been any excavation works, the potential collapse of adjacent structures must be considered, as their stability may be compromised.
- If there is any doubt as to the stability of any building, wall or structure the services of a Structural Engineer should be engaged. It is important to include checks of wall foundations.
- Support systems such as shoring, bracing or underpinning must be provided and used where there is any risk of collapse into an excavation from falling masonry or dry stone walls.