

FOR ISSUE TO ENTERPRISE UTILITIES, CONTRACTING AND POWER DISTRIBUTION

SHE ALERT

Potential to be worse: LV capped end flashover

What happened?

Whilst installing a water main in a trench excavated by the developers our contractor caused a flashover from an adjacent cable situated in the excavation. This cable was not on any utility plans and the contractor assumed it had been recently laid as part of an ongoing utilities installation. The cable’s position was questioned by the team but they did not escalate to developer or SSE. The team also failed to follow process and confirm the cable’s status using approved processes or suitable detection equipment like a Cat & Genny.

During the connection of the water pipes, the energised cable was disturbed resulting in a flash over at the cable end. (See Appendix 1) This flashover caused a fire, resulting in the plastic water pipe also catching fire. The operatives had to get a fire extinguisher and extinguish the flames. Thankfully there were no injuries on this occasion but there was potential for serious injury or even a fatality.

Appendix 1



What action is required?

Manager/Supervisors

- Set High Standards and ensure all cable installations are correctly recorded on site and within our GIS system
- Confirm operative understanding of the Earthed Capped End procedure. (LV-JI-900) Note: This cable had a cold shrink cap fitted during installation and the cable incorrectly made live with that cap still in place.
- Discuss the potential for harm in your Toolbox Talks or Setting to Work meetings.
- Ensure there is strict adherence to all procedures & agreed methods of work.

Everyone

- Challenge your colleagues, check all cable positions and confirm when installed with the site.
- Confirm all site plans are up to date and discuss this with the developer.
- Check “As Installed Plans” are added to the GIS system using the green label system in place.
- If you find a problem, STOP and seek additional guidance from your line manager before commencing work.

Communication by (✓)	LSG	✓	Notice board	✓	Tool-box talk	✓	Team brief	✓
Communication complete by (✓)	1 week	✓	2 weeks		1-month		2-months	

Issued by: Peter Owen, Utilities SHE Manager

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