



Linesman's Mate Struck by Battery Falling From Height

On Tuesday 2nd June 2015, an Energy Networks linesman's mate was struck on the back of his neck where the spine joins the skull by a rechargeable battery that fell from height.

Staff were undertaking work to upgrade a pole mounted transformer to facilitate supply to a domestic dwelling. During the works a battery operated crimping tool was left suspended, attached to a lifting eye of a newly installed pole mounted transformer.

With the work nearing completion and with no member of the working party working at height, the linesman's mate entered the working area to inspect the ground around the base of the pole at the same time the battery in the crimping tool became detached, falling to ground striking the employee.

An investigation is currently ongoing to determine all the facts and root cause, but one area that has been identified, is that the battery fitted and being used in the crimping tool was defective. The locking clips on either side, that secure the battery into the tool were broken.



Fully Functional Securing Clip

Actions and Recommendations:

Team leaders / Supervisors of staff who use battery operated tools.

- Carry out a visual inspection of the locking mechanisms, on all battery powered tools used by your staff.

Before starting work at height:

- Carry out a thorough pre-use visual inspection on all tools, equipment and PPE intended for use. If any item shows signs of damage, distress or does not operate or function correctly **STOP**, do not use and inform your Team leader / Supervisor.
- Minimise the amount of tools, equipment and materials required when working at height. **If you don't need it, don't take it up.**
- Establish a "Controlled Access Exclusion Zone" (Physical or Verbal Barrier). Ensure it's discussed and agreed by all staff on site and that it's documented / recorded on the site specific risk assessment.

During work at height:

- Nominate a person on the ground to control the "Exclusion Zone".
- Ensure all tools, equipment and materials are stored so they can not fall. **If you have finished with it, remove it.**
- Only enter an "Exclusion Zone" once a clear instruction has been given that all work above has stopped and that all tools and materials have been made secure.
- Upon completion of your work and once you have exited the "Exclusion Zone", inform the person(s) above so he / they can continue with their work.