



Serious Injury to Contract Linesman

While carrying out work for another Distribution Network Operator, a contract linesman received serious injuries when a petrol auger drill fell from height resulting in the drill – bit penetrating his neck / shoulder. (*reference safety alert opposite*)

This incident is similar to one which happened to a SPEN linesman in 2002, when a petrol auger fell approximately 6 metres striking the employee on the head.

Title of Alert	(SA-UD-007) Falling Objects
Target Audience	All Employees
Authorised by	Azhar Kharal
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Reason for this HSEQ Alert

An employee was seriously injured recently when a petrol auger drill fell from height and the 22mm drill-bit penetrated his neck/shoulder.

The employee was taken to hospital via ambulance where he received surgery to remove the drill bit and remains in hospital at this time recovering from his injuries.

The investigation into the accident is currently underway.



Action to be taken and learning to be applied

- Minimise the amount of tools, equipment and materials required at height;
- Ensure tools, equipment and materials are stored and secured so they cannot fall and cause injury;
- Establish a Controlled Access Exclusion Zone with the use of a physical barrier e.g. signs/barriers/tape;
- Nominate a dedicated person to control the work area to prevent entry by any unauthorised people or employees whilst the work at height is underway;
- Ensure when entry to the work area is required that the work is suspended temporarily;
- Always wear all required PPE and ensure your Head Protection is in good condition with no damage;
- Remain vigilant to overhead hazards at all times and stay clear from any work area when work at height is being undertaken.

Recommendations and Learning Points:

Before starting work at height:

- Minimise the amount of tools, equipment and materials required when working at height.
- Establish a “Controlled Access Exclusion Zone”.
- Nominate a dedicated person to control the work area (from the ground), while work is being undertaken at height.

During work at height:

- Ensure all tools, equipment and materials are stored so they cannot fall.

Accessing and Egressing an Exclusion Zone:

- Before you enter an exclusion zone, always speak to the person(s) working above.
- Only enter an “Exclusion Zone” once a clear instruction has been given and only then after all work has stopped and it is safe too.
- Upon completion of your work and once you have exited the work area, inform the person(s) above so they can continue with their work.

Action:

- Where appropriate, Managers, Team Leaders / Supervisors of staff working at height, please take the opportunity to refresh SPEN’s requirements on establishing and managing a “Controlled Access Exclusion Zone”.



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(To access / open the “tool box talk”, cut and paste link above into your web browser)