



SPEN Joints Received Superficial Burns



Ensure good communication between all parties on site to avoid a break in the Link

A jointer received superficial burns to both his wrists when his gas gun ignited gas that was leaking from a pipe beneath the LV cable within his excavation. Drawings indicated the gas mains / service were not within vicinity of the cable excavation, however gas utility drawings were incorrect.

SPEN were called to a no supply within the same area as Scotia Gas Networks (SGN) were addressing a gas leak. A discussion was held and fuses pulled to allow SGN to carry out their assessment of the reported gas smell. After some time SGN reported to SPEN that gas levels had dropped significantly and they then left site. After the SPEN jointer had completed his preparation work and was about to carry out work on the PILC service cable using a gas gun a fire started within the excavation. This was immediately extinguished using the vehicle fire extinguisher.

Scotia Gas explained later that if they had realised a naked flame was to be used by SPEN they would have intervened.

Recommendations and action points

- If a strong smell of gas exists do not use a naked flame or other sources of ignition. Contact the National Gas Emergency helpline. Please store the emergency contact numbers in your mobile phone. Tel: 0800 111 999.
- All persons on site, including those from other utilities and contractors, shall agree the hazards and control measures then sign onto each other's site specific risk assessments.
- All relevant responses to questions asked of other utility companies and contractors can be recorded on the SPEN START Risk Assessment.
- The Gas Companies operate a gas escape risk matrix that allows them to leave site when gas levels are acceptably low. If the intention is to use a naked flame ask for reassurance from the Gas Utility that it is safe to do so before they leave site.
- When operating with a naked flame have your fire extinguisher in close proximity.
- All Utility drawings are for reference only and where necessary dig trial holes to confirm positions of key apparatus.