



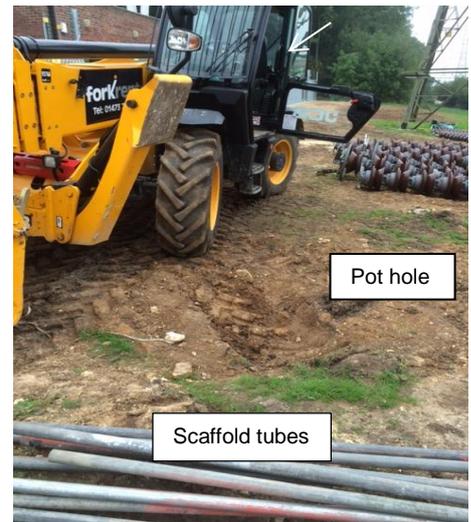
Every employee and contractor working for Northern Powergrid, should go home at the end of each shift uninjured and in good health after a productive days work.

Security of vehicle loads – Stay out of the Line-of-Fire

On the 17th September 2014, one of our contractors was moving a stillage containing scaffold tubes which was mounted on a telehandler. During the operation the load fell from the stillage to the ground.

The driver was maneuvering over uneven ground and was being assisted by a banks man. The vehicle hit an unseen pot hole which resulted in an unintentional movement of the load and some of the scaffolding slid out of the stillage. Fortunately the banks man was on the opposite side of the vehicle away from the falling scaffolding as it dropped to the ground. The banks man could have easily been hit by the falling equipment if he had he not been fully focused on the task! It is imperative that all loads are secured when being transported, even over short distances, to prevent them from breaking free and falling from vehicles.

A site specific risk assessment should be carried out when transporting any load but especially over uneven ground. Everyone involved in the operation should be briefed on the findings of the risk assessment and controls which have been identified.



Each operative should be totally focused on the task being carried out and should face the load being transported to enable a safe exit in the event of a problem occurring.

Consideration needs to be given to the safest route to be taken and the security of the load being transported. Operatives should be 'Out of the line of fire' i.e. not put themselves in a positions whereby a falling load could come into contact with them should things go wrong. A clear safety zone needs to be in place around the vehicle and load and this must be maintained during the course of the maneuver.

Where cylindrical objects are being transported such as the scaffolding tubes in this case, consideration should be given to edge protection in addition to any securing straps being used to prevent a load from falling from vehicles in the event that the straps fail. Selection of appropriate equipment for the task needs careful consideration as the best equipment may not be the equipment that is readily to hand.

When loading or unloading vehicles, again avoid being in the line of fire. This means being unnecessarily close to the load, as this will increase the risk of injury in the event something goes wrong. Always ensure cylindrical loads are chocked in some way to prevent accidental movement whilst loading or unloading.

It is important that any lifting or transporting activity is only undertaken by suitably trained and competent operatives in a well-planned and carefully executed manner. Any lifting or transporting activity has the potential for life threatening injury should the activity go wrong.

This incident serves as a reminder of how easily and quickly things can go wrong and follows on from similar incidents within BHE where two operatives were not so lucky. Both incidents involved the loading or unloading of cylindrical loads on the rear of vehicles whereby the loads fell resulting in fatal injuries to both operatives.