



Safety Advice 01-2004 (NZ)

UNAUTHORISED ACCESS OF POLE STRUCTURE

A serious injury accident occurred to a 10 year old child when he accessed an 11kV cable termination structure as part of a "dare".

The child gained access to a wood pole "pi" structure which was a cable termination to an overhead line forming a river crossing. Contact was made with a live cable tail causing the child to fall some 5 m to the ground. The child received burns as a result of contact with live parts and other injuries as a result of the fall.

This structure had been in service for some sixty years without any such incident occurring. The location was a recreation area used by children and the general public but out of public view.

Climbing steps were fitted to the poles and these complied with ECP34 cl 7.3.2 (being not less than 3 m above ground level). Stub poles were attached to the main poles as part of the design and from here, assisted by a friend, the child was able to gain a handhold onto the lower climbing steps and ascend the pole.

The lower climbing steps have been removed, anti-climb devices (eg. barbed wire / possum guards) attached to the pole just below the climbing steps and emergency contact signage attached to the structure. Networks with similar structures may wish to review these assets or locations within their area as a further step to prevent unauthorised access.

