



# *Safety Advice 02-1999 (NZ)*

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## **LINE MECHANIC SERIOUS HARM INCIDENT**

### **Incident**

A line mechanic received severe burns to both hands and forearms and was hospitalised, following accidental contact with a live HV line released under access permit to allow maintenance work to be carried out.

### **Issues**

The work involved replacement of poles and some conductors on an 11,000 volt spur line.

To allow this work to be carried out the line was released under an access permit issued following the removal of section fuses located on a remote structure from the worksite. The section fuses have been identified in the preparation of the release programme as the isolation point for the line.

Some time prior to the accident, work had been carried out on the remote structure to allow for the connection of an underground cable and transformer to supply a new installation. The section fuses connection on the remote structure is a central factor in the accident.

The removal of the section fuses did not achieve the isolation of the line, rather it isolated the new installation and as a result the line remained live.

Safety measures had been applied at the isolation point but not at the work site.

The Network owner has issued a directive that the use of voltage detectors is mandatory before commencing work on any line, and reminded contractors of the need to apply earths in accordance with SREI Section 6.