

HSE Bulletin

Title: Mobile plant power line strike

Event Date: May 2015

Ref: 2015/2

Summary of event:

An excavator boom struck a low voltage (400v) overhead power line with sufficient force to dislodge it from its pole.

The spotter was distracted by having other tasks to do.

The excavator operator inadvertently swung the boom striking the power line.



Key learning:

All power line strikes can result in a fatal electrocution to the plant operator and people standing on the ground in the vicinity of the equipment.

It is a misconception that low voltage (230V or 400V) is low risk and cannot cause serious harm.

Recommendations:

All operations in the vicinity of an overhead power line must be notified to the power supply company.

Under no circumstances must mobile equipment of conductive material be brought closer to power lines than 4m.

All operations in the vicinity of power lines must be undertaken under the supervision of a dedicated spotter.

Where possible it is recommended that power supply to overhead power lines is isolated prior to any works to eliminate the risk of electrocution.

For further information please contact:

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