

SAFETY ALERT

Excavator - Near Miss



Date of Issue:	29-07-18	Hazard Alert No:	HA-011-29-07-18		
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Details	Information and Description
Date Near Miss Happened	09/07/18
Location of Near Miss	Pukekawa
Weather/Conditions	Overcast, very wet under foot, reduced light (dusk)

What happened

1. Following a particularly wet period a pole fell over that supports the 22kV trunk line feeding the Pukekawa switching station.
2. Due to the location of the pole and the conditions, a Counties Power approved contractor was engaged to assist with the pole replacement using a 13T Excavator.
3. At the time of the near miss, the old pole had been cleared and the new pole had been stood and backfilled. Light was poor due to the time of day and the weather.
4. The digger operator was collecting pre-prepared dry fill with his bucket and placing this around the pole to reinforce the ground supporting the pole, to prevent future subsidence issues.
5. A Counties Power employee approached from behind the digger, as the digger operator was swinging a full bucket of fill toward the pole, and the employee came into the projected path of the bucket. The operator came off the controls and the bucket pulled up in time.
6. The fact that the operator came off the controls in time is very fortunate, as this is very likely to have resulted in a serious incident.

Note: This high potential near miss wasn't reported in line with timeframes outlined in the Counties Power Incident and Near Miss Reporting Procedure. To the credit of our Subcontractor, although not reported within timeframes, this near miss was reported approximately one week later, when they found a suitable opportunity to discuss this with the Overhead Works Manager. Discussions were had with personnel directly involved and they were reminded of the requirement to report all incidents and high potential near misses to their manger within 2 hours.

Learnings and Outcomes

1. All incidents and high potential near misses must be reported to a manager within 2 hours. If near misses aren't reported then we loose the opportunity to investigate and discuss with the wider team to look at how we can prevent a potential future incident from occurring. The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 specifically references the above, and employees can be held accountable, if they are deemed to have been able to prevent an incident from occurring. E.g. reporting a near miss.
2. Always adhere to exclusion zones when working near to excavators or any other heavy machinery. See the below figure showing exclusion zones when working with excavators.
3. Before approaching any machinery, you must:
 - a) First make eye contact with the operator and wait for acknowledgement that you have been seen.
 - b) Only enter the machineries working zone once the operator has taken their hands off the controls, or activated lock outs.

Note a site specific hazard ID had been completed during the toolbox meeting referencing relevant JSA's such as Pole Replacement and Excavator use. Maintaining exclusion zones had been documented on the tailgate, however this was not adhered to by this employee.

Approved by:

Joshua Moore, Overhead Works Manger.

