



LOW VOLTAGE UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC CABLE DISCHARGED CAUSING MINOR BURN INJURIES

Summary of Incident:

On 13 July 2022 an underground civils team attended site to undertake excavation activities within the highway in preparation for the installation of a duct 56 (2") overhead pole bend from an existing underground 4" duct to the existing overhead telecommunication pole in readiness for cabling activities.

An on-site / point of work risk assessment was undertaken, work pack and utility drawings were referred to and reviewed, cable avoidance tool (C.A.T) was utilised and identified underground apparatus marked up. Excavation activities then commenced by breaking ground and digging down with the use of handheld insulated tools.

On reaching an approximate depth of 700mm the operative had inadvertently damaged a Low Voltage 300mm (.5) Steel Taped Paper Insulated Lead Covered (PILC) armoured cable causing it to discharge. This resulted in minor burn injuries to the left forearm and left facial area of the body.



Other Factors:

- The Genny was not utilised in conjunction with the C.A.T to increase the effectiveness of locating underground services
- Inappropriate selection and wearing of Personal Protective Equipment, leaving large areas of the body (arms) exposed
- Insufficient hazard identification and control measures identified and recorded on the On-Site / Point of work Risk Assessment



LEARNING POINTS

- Always ensure you adopt the correct working methods in line with your training, skills, experience, and knowledge
- Risk assess your activities, identify all associated hazards, implement appropriate control measures and record via the on-site / point of work Risk Assessment App
- Always ensure Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is suitable and sufficient for the task (e.g., flame retardant, anti-static, arc resistant) and worn correctly to provide you with the necessary protection
- When working in and around underground apparatus, always comply with HSG47 avoiding dangers from underground services; utilising both C.A.T and Genny in conjunction with utility drawings, visual identification of street furniture, previous excavation scarring, marking up and establishing exclusion zones
- If unsure, Stop Work and Ask

**NOTHING THAT WE DO IS SO IMPORTANT THAT WE CANNOT
TAKE THE TIME TO DO IT SAFELY**