

# Underground service strikes

April 2010



## Guidance note for supervisors

Immediate actions.

### First aid

- Do not move a casualty unless they are in direct danger.
- Take care not to touch exposed cables or tools and equipment which could be live.
- Any electrical burn or electric shock injury must be given medical attention however minor it may seem.
- Call an ambulance if necessary.

### All strikes

- Do not attempt repairs.
- Inform utility supplier/service owner as soon as possible.
- Report all damage, even if leaks or loss of power are not evident.
- Inform service users.
- Inform owners of adjacent services if there is a risk of gas or water ingress or contamination.

### Gas strikes

- Call national emergency number 0800 111999.
- Evacuate workers and others to a safe distance.
- Warn local residents and businesses.
- No smoking or naked flames.
- Keep vehicles and members of the public away from the area.
- Warn service users if a service connection has been disturbed as this may result in a leak within the building.
- Co-operate with and assist gas supply company, police and fire authority.

### Electric cable strikes

- Avoid all contact.
- Do not try to disentangle cables from excavator buckets.
- Do not attempt to leave the excavator involved unless assured that the cable is no longer live.
- Evacuate workers and others to a safe distance.
- Keep vehicles and members of the public away from the area.
- Contact service owner and emergency services as appropriate.
- Co-operate with and assist cable owner and emergency services.

## Preparing for the claim

Post incident there is likely to be a claim by the service provider for damage to their equipment.

Retaining all the information listed in the Pre works on-site checklist is an excellent starting point in determining whether there is a legal obligation to pay for the damage.

In addition the following simple tasks can prove useful when the claim is submitted.

- 1 Obtain all relevant plans.
- 2 Are the plans clear and include all relevant information and have you complied with HSG 47? Taking photographs of the scene to include the damaged utility and if possible evidence the depth of the utility. If a ruler or measure is not available use something that can provide a sense of scale, for example a mobile phone or a piece of equipment that can be measured at a later date.
- 3 Record names and contact details of witnesses.
- 4 Get witnesses to provide a brief written statement of what occurred.
- 5 Record the details of any subcontractors who are involved.
- 6 If you are on site when the utility provider attends to repair the damage record how many personnel attend, how long they remain on site and if you are aware, how much material they use to repair the damage – i.e. length of cable.
- 7 If damage is significant, preserve equipment (ie. mole) as this may provide useful evidence in subsequent forensic examination.

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