highways england

INFORMATION

Safety Alert

Ignition of Gas Service Following a Strike

6 December 2019

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by Highways England's supply chain partner:

CityFibre

CityFibre

SAFETY BULLETIN SB012

Ignition of Gas service following a strike

On Friday the 29th November at 14:30 CityFibre were informed of a high potential strike incident. CityFibre's Principal Contractor (PC) reported a combined gas and electric strike, resulting in ignition of the gas.

What Happened:

Executive Summary – On Friday the 29th November at 14:30 CityFibre were informed of an incident in an FTTH City. CityFibre's Principal Contractor (PC) reported a combined gas and electric strike, resulting in ignition of the gas. SGN (Gas Network) and the emergency services were called to support in the incident. SGN and PC worked to make the area safe, no injuries were reported and the road was closed as a precaution whilst the repair was made. The cables were lowered, trench backfilled and area made safe with full reinstatement undertaken the following morning.

The strike was on both Electric - 35mm & Gas – 25mm service connections to a property. The services had been laid in a combined utilities trench. There were no safety indicative markers such as tiles or tape present in the trench, nor was there any distinct separation or sand split between the two utilities. The utilities were buried significantly shallower than specified with by NJUG (industry guidelines).

The fire was extinguished by 17:00, with PC supporting SGN engineers by hand digging to expose the damaged plant and electricity cables. By 19:00 the electric supply was restored. A temporary reinstatement was made of the excavation and the PC returned in the morning to permanently reinstate the works.

Key Learning:

1. *Ensure all teams are briefed on the STREET WORKS UK GUIDANCE ON THE POSITIONING AND COLOUR CODING OF UNDERGROUND UTILITIES' APPARATUS*
2. *Ensure that Safe Dig Techniques are followed as per HSG47*
3. *Ensure service drawings are in date and fully reviewed prior to any excavation work*
4. *Use the CAT & Genny together (in avoidance mode). We recommend the use of the ECAT4+ and version 4 Genny so that Survey results can be recorded electronically. This will aid the identification of correct usage and level of usage. All operators of the equipment must be trained and competent to use.*
5. *Safe systems of work such as risk assessments and method statements are in place and understood.*
6. *All strikes must be reported to incidents@cityfibre.com as detailed in the contractors contract and/or construction phase plan.*

In the event of a utility service strike:

Useful Links:

http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg47.pdf

http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/information/excavations.htm

"Nothing is more important than returning home safe and well at the end of each day, we must collectively do all we can"