

HEALTH & SAFETY ALERT



Buried Service Strike – High Holborn

The Safety Alert below is an external alert that was compiled by our colleagues at Barhale.

External Safety Alert 2013/03

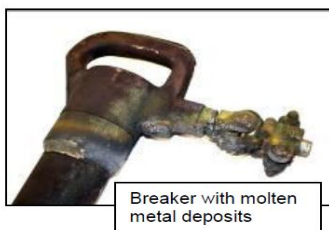
Safe			Efficient			Responsible		
Alert	Best Practice	Lessons Learned	Alert	Best Practice	Lessons Learned	Alert	Best Practice	Lessons Learned
Buried Service Strike – Operative sustains flash burns								

Overview of the incident

On Wednesday 12th December 2012 a Barhale Operative working at High Holborn on the Crossrail project in London struck a live buried electric cable while operating a pneumatic handheld breaker. He was taken to hospital suffering 18% burns, predominantly to his legs, hands and forearms. He was discharged from hospital before Christmas, is recovering well at home and is expected to make a full recovery.

The LV cable was clearly marked and identified and reflected in the Permit to Break Ground. The working gang had received briefings to confirm the existence of the cable and the control measures to be applied. The excavation was being undertaken in the pavement, adjacent to the kerb bedding.

A joint investigation was undertaken into the incident and the HSE are also investigating.



Breaker with molten metal deposits



Light eye protection with molten metal spatter on the lenses



Damage to the breaker point from the flash

Findings and lessons from the investigation

- There was no approach made to asset owner to request either, isolation or diversion of the LV cable
- The Injured Party was not wearing flame retardant clothing
- The excavation activity did not stop when kerb bedding obstruction was encountered to determine the way forward
- There were no clear work instructions given to the workforce on how the excavation work around the kerb and footpath was to be carried out
- There was a temporary absence of supervision whilst undermining the kerb
- Services had not been positively identified as they were located
- The Utility providers were not consulted to check that the drawings held were the most recent copies

Hi-vis trousers, worn by the injured party (not flame retardant)

