

Safety Alert

Cable Pull Incident

Safety Alert 49

Date: 4 February 2014

During a cable pull on site the stands holding a number of cable drums moved causing the drums to fall forward towards the EGT apprentice. Unfortunately, the EGT apprentice was unable to move out of the line-of-fire and sustained a serious knee injury when struck by the cable drum.

Contributing Factors:

- The cable stands were set up on grassed location and not hard stand;
- The EGT apprentice was positioned in close proximity to the cable drums, and
- The cables were pulled from the top of the drum increasing the likelihood of instability.



Recommendations

To ensure the recurrence of a similar incident is avoided, the following guidelines for the set-up of cable drums and the conducting of cable pulling operations should be considered:

- Cable pulling jobs should be carefully planned prior to the commencement of the cable pull,
- All workers must be involved in the completion of a risk assessment/JSA prior to commencing the cable pull,
- Conduct a pre-start meeting to ensure all workers understand the requirements, their duties and the hazard controls that are place,
- Nominate a team leader for each cable pull,
- The Site Supervisor must inspect all cable pull set ups and routes prior to commencement of the cable pull,
- Ensure cable stands and rollers are suitable for the task (Retained cable drum shaft, solid drum stands and rollers rated for the weight of the cable drums, roller assemblies are welded set up by competent personnel),
- Ensure cable stands are on firm and level footing,
- Ensure the cable is pulled from the bottom of the drum
- Where cables enter pits or go around corners minimise friction by the use of roller guides and lubricant,
- Ensure any cable pulling rope and tackle is correctly rated and suitable for the job,
- The team leader is the only person that can commence the cable pull however anybody can call a stop to the operation,
- Follow directions from your team leader,
- Once the cable pull has commenced, continue the pull at a steady pace, and
- Do not stand in the line of the pull and keep a safe distance from the cable drums.
- Do not become distracted or complacent
- Do not move from a safe position, or investigate problems unless the cable pull has stopped
- Where communication in the team is via radios or similar electronic devices this should done by personnel with that specific role,
- Wear correct PPE, including gloves

Note: If a powered winch is being used additional planning and hazard controls will be required including but not limited to task SWMS, load calculations, rated equipment and training for correct operation.