Learning Alert 24-19 Burntwood Service Damage

Incident Summary?

A subcontractor was working at the bottom of site excavating a trench for a pipe diversion. The team came across the electrical cables that were known to be in the dig. The supervisor CAT scanned the area and over the cables, and there was no signal from the cables. The team started to hand dig around the cables and noticed a PVC pipe underneath. At around 3pm the supervisor carefully excavated around the pipe by hand to expose it, once again using the CAT but no signal was detected from the pipe. The team then tapped the pipework to determine the material. When the team realised the pipe was plastic, the supervisor concluded that the pipe was likely old ducting for the redundant cables.

In order to verify whether it was a duct or not, the team used a saw to make a cut in the pipework, this resulted in water spraying out.

Work was stopped and reporting procedures were followed. STW were informed and isolated the pipework, the pipework was repaired and back in service by 6pm.

Photographs

Photo 1: Damage To Pipework

Photo 2: Temporary Repair

Root Causes

A lack of understanding from the subcontractor about procedures when an uncharted service is discovered.

- The supervisor thought it was acceptable to cut into the pipework as a trial to check it was a redundant cable duct. The supervisor did not consult with anyone else on site regarding this.

A lack of information about the working area communicated to the subcontractor.

- No information regarding the known uncharted service was provided to the subcontractor (washwater pipework).
- No information was communicated regarding the recent service strike on an uncharted service in the same working area.

Learnings – What do we need to do differently?

When uncharted services are discovered, the works in the area must be stopped and re-assessed;

- Is the service live or redundant? If it is live, can it be isolated?
- Is the service critical to the site?
- What is the condition of the service?
- Can the service be supported and protected sufficiently?
- What are the ground conditions?
- Can the working area be moved?

Communicating all relevant information related to the working area to everyone on site is necessary.

- Are there any known services that are uncharted in the working area?
- Has there been proper communication regarding past incidents in the working area?
- Are the service drawings for the working area currently accurate and up to date?
- Has all the available information been gathered in the ground disturbance permit? Furthermore, has the permit been finalised in the working area?

It is important that all personnel on site are competent and understand the process of a treatment site.

- Site inductions must be conducted before allowing entry on to the site. The site team must also ensure that all competencies are uploaded to the online site induction platform.
- It is essential to provide guidance and assistance to subcontractors who may have different backgrounds in terms of their previous work experience. This will facilitate their understanding of the processes on the site.
- The site orientation should be precise and up to date, incorporating details about previous incidents that have occurred on the site. This practice will ensure that any new workers who join the site are well-informed about the working areas and their associated risks.

Authorised by:	Zoe Robertson	**Date:**	13/02/2024
Distribution list:	*Operations, Capital Delivery, Contractors, and Executive Management Team*		

MWHT Requirements.

Actions

- Always follow your Safe System of Work
- Always remember the Lifesaving Commitments
- Follow the advice contained in this Learning Alert
- Ensure you complete a Safe Start card at the start of your shift
- If in **DOUBT STOP WORK** and seek advice from your supervisor
- Report all Incidents or "Improve Its"

Manager:		**Project No:**	
Date:		**Project:**	

BRIEFING RECORD: I HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE BRIEFING ON THIS LEARNING ALERT AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH MWHT REQUIREMENTS.

Name	Signature	Company