

## TITLE: Service Strike – Sewerage Pipe

### What Happened?

On the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2011 an unexposed sewerage pipe was cracked by stones/rubble during excavation by a 360 excavator. This resulted in a spillage of sewage, Thames Water isolated the pipe whilst repairs were made.

225mm PVC single walled sludge pipe

Power cable protected with tiles



### Safe Working – A Reminder

To minimise the risks, the following precautions must be taken.

- 1 Reference service drawings and visually check the surrounding area for features which may lead you to suspect there are unknown buried services in the area.
- 2 Excavation or ground penetration activities must not start unless a Permit to Break Ground and a method statement has been issued, briefed and signed. The excavation checklist must also be completed.
- 3 All supervisors and operatives engaged in activities on or near services shall have attended a minimum half day service awareness course.
- 4 Carry out a thorough scan to locate the position and depth of the services.
- 5 Dig trial holes so that identified or suspected services can be positively confirmed, label identified services.
- 6 Mark the location of all identified services on the ground and sketch them on the Permit
- 7 If the expected services cannot be located, seek clarification from the service owner
- 8 Excavations within 0.5m of services must be by hand digging using insulated tools
- 9 Scanning should be continued throughout excavation activities
- 10 Exposed services must be adequately supported and protected from damage
- 11 All work must be adequately supervised to ensure that the permit and method statements are followed.
- 12 Where unexpected services are uncovered STOP WORK until the risk assessment, method statement and Permit to Break Ground has been reviewed and re-briefed.

**Always assume that a service is LIVE unless it has been confirmed otherwise.**

