

An email from a client has highlighted unsafe condition/unsafe working practices which has the potential for the risk of serious injury. This is resulting from works being carried out by operatives working in the vicinity of exposed services, especially electric cables, during torrential down pours.

On VMR we had an exposed electric service in an excavation that went pop due to its exposure to torrential rain luckily no-one had been working nearby.



The following safety precautions must be observed and adhered by all operatives during poor rainy weather conditions:

- Ensure that a Site specific risk assessment is carried out prior to work commencing to identify additional hazards that may be introduced to the work site due to poor or bad weather conditions.
- Exposed electric services are to be protected with split ducting.
- Refrain from working near or around exposed electric services during torrential downpours.
- Reporting exposed electric services that appears to be in poor condition, i.e., rusty appearance, squashed, insulation peeling off. Works should cease in these excavations until the service provider has been alerted and attended site to make safe.

Other risk of working in excavation during rainy weather includes:

- The ground may become unstable/loose which might result in the sides of the excavation collapsing. Steps should be taken to support the sides of excavations of any dept in rainy conditions. Rain water stored in excavation should be pumped out before work commence in such excavations.
- Excavation should be inspected before each entry.
- The movement of plant/machinery close to the edge of excavation especially on soft grounds will increase the risk of excavation collapsing.
- Ensure that excavated spoil heaps are kept the correct distance back from the trench edge

If in doubt STOP WORK and alert your supervisor.