

Safety Alert

Number 35

14th February 2020



POWERLINE GOALPOSTS

Background

Goalposts on a standing sale Harvesting site were pulled down by a passing vehicle. The goalposts were broken and on the ground when discovered by the Forestry Work Manager (FWM). The incident was not reported to the FWM.

What Happened

- An Overhead Electricity Line (OEL) crossed the road on the Harvesting site. Goal posts were erected to protect operators by acting as a physical height restraint to ensure work equipment and lorries could pass safely under the OEL. The goal posts also warned road users of the presence of the OEL.
- The FWM arrived on site and saw that the goalposts were on the ground and broken
- The FWM made arrangements for the immediate reinstatement of the goalposts

Findings

- The goalposts were down and broken when the FWM arrived on site
- It would appear that the goalposts were pulled down by a vehicle, passing under them. Vehicle users including timber hauliers say the goalposts were already down when they arrived on site
- Damage to the goalposts was not reported to either the Coillte or the Mill FWM.
- This created a **major hazard** for other vehicles coming on site as there were no goalposts present on one side of the OEL

Corrective Action

- Safety alert communicated to all staff, contractors and customers outlining the circumstances of this accident.
 - Reiterate the importance of goalposts as both a visual warning and a height limiting safety structure to prevent contact with OEL
 - Outline the duties of the site safety co-ordinator and other operatives on site to report incidents
 - Highlight the possibility of prosecution for damaging items such as goalposts provided for securing the health and safety of persons at work under section 14 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005

Learning Points

- Goalposts are erected to warn of the presence of OEL's and also act as a physical safety height restraint for lorries and other vehicles passing under them
- Any damage caused to goalposts must be reported immediately to the Coillte and Mill FWM (standing sales). If you come into contact with Goalposts, halt work and report the incident immediately. Do not leave the site until authorised to do
- **Site safety co-ordinators and other operators on site must report all accidents in a prompt manner**
- Where damage is caused, work activities which involve travelling under the damaged goalposts **must** be suspended until goalposts are reinstated
- **It is a prosecutable offence** under section 14 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to damage or misuse anything provided for securing the safety, health and welfare of persons at work (such as goalposts), or place at risk the safety, health or welfare of persons in connection with work activities
- Do not endanger the safety health and welfare of yourself and others in the workplace

Please Don't Walk By



Ensure this Safety Alert is brought to the attention of all employees and sub-contractors.