



SUBJECT: Two Shocking Strikes

RECIPIENTS: All E&E Staff

ISSUE DATE: April 2019 **REF:** HSB 142

A Shocking Fine



In the first incident a company has been sentenced after a worker was severely burned when he accidentally struck an underground cable with a breaker.

The Magistrates' Court was told that the company had failed to use cable avoidance systems during the installation of a sign

The employee was using a breaker to create post holes for a new sign when he hit an electricity cable. He sustained burn injuries to his arms and face and had burns to his hair, eyelashes and eyebrows.

Investigating, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company did not use neither a diagram to show where the cables were positioned, or a cable locator to detect the presence and location of underground services before the work began.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. It has been fined £35,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2,475.

HSE inspector said: "This wholly avoidable incident was caused by the failure of the company to appropriately plan and execute a safe system of work while fitting the signs"

In the second incident a company must pay £400,000 after a driver operating on its site received a fatal electrical shock when the extendable grab arm on his lorry came into contact with an overhead power line.

The Magistrates' Court heard the driver was employed by a lorry hire firm. He was unloading material when the grab arm hit an 11kW overhead power line.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that the company had risk-assessed working under overhead power lines but failed to implement a safe system of work for doing so.

The construction work was poorly planned, and employees had not been trained. The company pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. It must also pay costs of £17,242.

The HSE inspector said the accident was caused by the failure of the company to implement safe systems of work and to ensure that health and safety documentation was communicated and followed.

If you require further assistance or clarification on the subject please contact:

Corporate Health & Safety Advisers (see George section: Corporate > Information for Working > Risk Management > H&S Advisers)