Hydro Tasmania

SSL/INJURY/ILLNESS INCIDENT OUTCOME

RED NOTICE

Damaged power cable Nive rive picnic area

Document Number	260610_IO	Date Issued	12 June 2026
Incident Owner	Connor Knight	Approved By	Head of WHS
SAP Number	92470	Type of Incident	Potential SSL

Incident description

During excavation works for the Tungatinah fire main upgrade, contractors completed the usual underground service identification checks. This included a Before You Dig Australia (BYDA) search, underground service locating, and a review of the available utility drawings.

A galvanised water pipe was identified and excavation commenced. When workers exposed and cut into the galvanised water pipe, they discovered no water and unexpectedly cut into an energised electrical cable running inside the pipe.

Further investigation found the actual water pipe was located even deeper underground. No injuries occurred, RCD tripped.

Potential SSL - Capacity

What is Capacity? An event where high-energy was released/ contacted and our controls functioned as intended, avoiding serious injury - a valuable opportunity to understand how controls perform under real conditions.

SSL criteria is based on 4 questions:

High-energy present?	Yes	240v electricity
High-energy incident?	Yes	Contact with energy source
Direct Controls?	Yes	RCD, double insulated tools
Serious injury?	No	No injury occurred

Hydro SSL	SCL Model	Tier	SCL Classification Description
Actual SSL	HSIF	1	High-Energy Serious Injury or Fatality (SIF)
Potential SSL	PSIF	1	Potential Serious Injury or Fatality (SIF)
Actual SSL	LSIF	1	Low-Energy Serious Injury or Fatality (SIF)
Potential SSL	CAPACITY	2	Energy release, direct controls present, no SIF

Incident Contributing Factors:

- The electrical cable had been installed inside a pipe in a non-standard arrangement, thus available service drawings and detection methods did not identify the electrical cable
- Workers reasonably believed the identified pipe was the water service they intended to connect to, which had been isolated prior, thus it made sense to cut into the galvanised pipe
- The electrical service feeding into the picnic area building had been identified prior, but the concealed cable was a secondary service feeding the BBQ area which had not been identified

Incident Learnings & Actions for leaders, employees and contractors

1) The service locating process did not prevent the event, but the layered controls helped prevent the event from escalating into a potentially serious injury (RCD protection on the electrical circuit, use of double-insulated/battery-powered equipment, appropriate PPE including gloves)
2) Even well-executed service location processes can be defeated by undocumented, non-standard infrastructure. Plan for uncertainty when working on legacy assets.
3) Treat underground or concealed services as potentially hazardous and always isolate and test for dead. Where practical, verify the services before cutting, drilling, penetrating, or modifying them.
4) Report unexpected findings - if site conditions differ from drawings or expected conditions