



Best Laid Plans

In last month's Bulletin, we highlighted the need to plan for overhead and underground services. Since then an interesting near miss has been reported, emphasising the need to carefully check for underground services.

■ Reassurance of the location of underground services from the water utility supply company and the client had been received for a site. However, due to the proximity of buildings on the site, good practice dictated that extra checking was required so a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) was used across the site. This detected the presence of an additional water supply pipe running through site. This was therefore duly updated on the hazard map.

Our recent guidance note on electrical and other services on site sets out procedures to help identify the risk from underground services and how to manage them. The guidance note has been written to complement existing documentation such as FISA 804.

Learning Points:

1. Underground services are a hidden hazard on site.
2. A risk adjusted approach must be taken, but information about their presence must be gathered.
3. If the risk assessment identifies the possible presence of services then they must be positively located.

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Arrangements for Safety with Electricity and Other Services on Site



INTRODUCTION

This document sets out arrangements to ensure safety with electricity on Tilhill Forestry's working sites. The document doesn't describe all the arrangements that must be made so it must be read alongside FISA Leaflet Guide 804, Electricity at work: Forestry.

This document supplements FISA 804 and sets out how we intend to implement these measures on our sites.

PLANNING

- The landowner is required to provide the Forest Works Manager (FWM) with information concerning both OHPLs and underground services.
- If dates for a line de-energisation are already agreed with the Network Operator this must be in the sale documentation.
- The FWM should look at the information given on the site maps and compare with their own observations on site, looking for apparatus on site/close by that will require power or other services but have not been indicated on the plans.
- Identify the location of any services and mark them on the map and, where required, physically on the site. Until advised by the Network Operator, treat all power lines as though they are high voltage. This applies for overhead and underground cables.

It is important that in the absence of a positive identification of a BT line, any line is treated as a live electrical line.

- Anyone receiving a permit from the Network Operator must have received training as stipulated by the Network Operator. The permit receiver may be the FWM, a contractor or a representative from the Network Operator who is familiar with the site and planned works.

OVERHEAD POWER LINES (OHPL) CROSSING POINTS

- The height of any OHPL crossing the work site and forest access roads must be measured by the Network Operator. The safety clearance height must then be notified in writing by the Network Operator.

Access Roads:

- Crossings on access roads are the responsibility of the Landowner, unless stated in the contract.
- OHPLs crossing access routes must be well signed. The signs must be clearly visible to approaching traffic, sufficiently ahead of the OHPLs to allow the vehicle drivers to take any required action and be maintained throughout the whole job, including haulage after forestry work has stopped. The safe height must be clearly displayed.

Worksite:

The worksite is defined to include the felling area and the stacking area.

- Crossings on work sites are the responsibility of the Forest Works Manager. This includes forest roads within the worksite or between adjacent work sites.
- Goal posts must be erected to the height specified on the documentation provided by the Network Operator on the work site. The Forest Works Manager has responsibility for both erecting and maintaining these goal posts.
- Where the FWM feels it is appropriate a single goal post can be erected at the exit of the work site, set at the height of the lowest safe crossing height of all OHPLs on the access route. This is primarily to prevent timber haulage traffic striking power lines on the forest access roads on the way out from site.

continued

Weather 'tis nobler in the mind

One of the hardest decisions to make in forestry is often when work on site should stop due to the weather conditions.

■ Two near misses reported in the last month highlight two such situations.

During harvesting operations we are often considering the risk from trees blowing over during strong winds, but what about the possibility of this occurring while restocking?

In the first near miss, a planting squad reported just this scenario when they saw two retained trees blow over while they were working. At this point they decided to leave site. They returned the following day to find a tree had fallen where they had parked their vehicle the previous day.

In the second incident, a Harvesting Manager attended a site to undertake a check on roadside stocks. In conversation with the contractor they had discussed the snowy access road and decided that it was still accessible. However as they

drove further into the site the road was not passable. They left site to return the next day whereby the snow had melted.

Remember:

- Trees that have previously been sheltered by recently felled trees will be more prone to windblow.
- Trees do not always fall in the direction of the prevailing wind.

Learning Points:

1. Always keep an eye on weather forecasts and review conditions on site.
2. Consider windblow on restock site, especially look for a 'brown edge' to an adjacent crop.
3. Consider the effect on your own safety accessing site if the access roads are snow bound. Also consider how an emergency response may be affected.



Above: Library image. Photo is not of site referenced in the article.

No Flies On Us

Waste from our work usually falls into the category of planting bags, pallets, used pesticide or fuel containers. However, we are increasingly dealing with fly tipping in our forests and woodlands.

■ Fly-tipping undermines legitimate waste businesses and is costly to both the public sector and landowners to clear up. Local authorities, Environment Agency, NRW and SEPA have powers to investigate and deal with incidents but no obligation to clear waste – that tends to fall on the landowner and so the quicker it is removed the better to avoid more fly-tipping.

SEE IT – REPORT IT – SORT IT!

If you come across fly-tipped waste on our managed land please report it immediately to a Tilhill Manager. The quicker it is dealt with and removed the less environmental damage and the less chance more fly-tipping occurs.

All fly-tipping should also be reported to the relevant authorities.

- **England and Wales** always report to the local authority – Go to www.gov.uk and search 'Report Fly-tipping', using the postcode to find the right contact number.
- **Scotland** use DUMB DUMPERS to report – dumbdumpers.org or 0854 2 30 40 90.

DISPOSING OF FLY-TIPPING

Waste must be collected by a licensed waste carrier and taken to a suitable waste management site. Fly-tipping

containing asbestos (as shown in the picture) must only be handled by people trained, and in some cases, licensed to do so. Contact a member of the Safety & Assurance team for advice and see also HSE leaflet 'How to deal with fly-tipped asbestos waste.'

Remember:

- All hazardous waste must be accompanied by a Consignment Note. General waste is sent with a Waste Transfer Note.
- Fly-tipped waste is not just hazardous to the environment. Assess the risks of what it may contain and take appropriate steps to handle it safely.
- Where asbestos is found in fly-tipped waste it should be cordoned off and marked as hazardous, not to be moved by unauthorised persons.



**THINK ENVIRONMENT –
YEARS TO CREATE,
SECONDS TO DESTROY.**

Fire Starter

As the days draw out and there is some warmth from the sun hopefully we can look forward to a period of the sites drying up from the winter.

■ This is good in terms of managing site conditions and the risk from diffuse pollution, but signals the start of the increase in risk of forest fires.

These can often be initiated by forestry machines catching fire. This is usually started around the engine from oil leaks or belly pans full of dried forest residue.

Remember:

- Inspect your machinery and clear out belly pans and other areas where forest residue may collect.
- Ensure all fire suppression systems and extinguishers are operable and readily available.
- Review and update forest fire plans in case of emergency.



1. Types of Forest Fires

There are three types of fire in forest and moor/heathland conditions:

- **Surface fires.** Burn fuels at or near ground level. This is the most common type of fire.
- **Ground fires.** In dry conditions surface fires can burn organic soil layers and develop into ground fires. These can be difficult to detect and extinguish.
- **Crown fires.** Surface fires can ascend into the tree canopy and develop into crown fires, which can move very quickly and become extremely intense.

Ladder fuels is vegetation that links ground vegetation to tree branches and increase the probability of crown fires. Sustained crown fires are rare in UK conditions.

2. What to do if you discover a Forest Fire

Establish whether anyone is at immediate risk. In the event of a fire it is essential that a clear working system is identified, agreed and understood and that it includes a clear command and control structure with good communications. The working system may have to be changed if conditions alter, e.g. wind shifts at the head of the fire.

- Dial 999 or 112 and ask for the Fire Service.
- Give them the location of the fire (Grid Reference/Postcode from Emergency Response Card) and as much information as you possibly can including access/rendezvous point.

If the forest is managed by Tilhill Forestry

- Notify the Local Office. If outside normal office hours call the mobile numbers listed in Appendix ii at the back of this Handbook.

Properties that are managed by Tilhill Forestry are usually identified by Tilhill Fire Danger signs located at the main entrance and other strategic points.

If there is a sign identifying the ownership or management responsibilities then call that number, if you get no response or there is no signage then call the local Tilhill Office as detailed above.



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In The News Elsewhere

We insist that all timber stacks on out sites are adequately signed to warn people not to climb on them. A tragic case from the Scottish Borders was evidence of why it is standard practice in the industry to display such signs. An experienced retired Forest Worker was killed when a timber stack became unstable and he was trapped under a log. It is believed that he was trying to retrieve the log from the top of the stack himself. Brief details follow:

■ The death of a forestry worker after a log pile became unstable was a tragic accident, a sheriff has found.

An experienced forest worker died from a head injury and compression of his chest after becoming trapped under a fallen wooden log. The accident happened on a track near a disused Sawmill.

The deceased regularly visited the sawmill, even after retiring as a forester, to fell trees and cut up logs. A fatal accident inquiry was told he spoke to the timber yard manager on the morning of his death. He asked about getting the use of a forklift to remove a large log from the top of the pile which had become dislodged.

The Timber Yard Manager said he would assist after lunch. When he arrived at the log pile he saw the deceased's white pick-up truck was already there and thought he must have changed his mind and decided to move it himself.

He explained: "When I got closer I could see him lying at the side of the pick-up with the log – I assume which was the one he wanted to move – on top of him".

The Timber Yard Manager recalled how the deceased had asked him for help moving the log earlier saying: "It is better lying on the ground than lying on me."

Learning Points:

1. Timber stacks can become unstable if people climb on them.
2. All timber stacks should carry adequate warning signs to keep off them.
3. Consider heights of stacks, think about the ground conditions and length of product and public access.



April 2017 – Safety & Assurance Bulletin briefing

I have been personally briefed in the contents of this Safety & Assurance Bulletin.

Please add any questions relating to this briefing or any other health, safety and environmental matters you wish to raise:

Please add any suggestions on health, safety and environmental matters:

I have been briefed by: _____ My District is: _____

I understand that I am encouraged to submit comment and contribution from this bulletin.

Signed: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

ORIGINAL sheet to be held at District.

Send a **COPY** to: Head of Safety, Tilhill Forestry, Birchden Farm, Broadwater Forest Lane, Groombridge, Kent, TN3 9NR. Fax: 01892 860441. Email: ios@tilhill.com

Contractors: If you would like your own copy of this Safety & Assurance Bulletin please contact your local office and ask to be included on the mailing list.