

MANUFACTURING SAFETY ALERT

Ask Yourself
“Could it happen here?”

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

Cut Conduit

An underground electrical conduit was accidentally severed during concrete cutting. The damage went unnoticed until the mill restarted the following Monday, when the breaker connected to the line was repeatedly tripped. Work in the area was stopped to investigate. An excavation confirmed the conduit had been cut at the location where the concrete work had taken place.

A site scan indicated the conduit was about 2ft deep (though these readings can be distorted). The project manager had planned to mark the line but did not complete the task. In addition, the team leader performing the work was not familiar with the site’s specific cutting and digging procedures and went ahead with the concrete cutting, which resulted in the severed conduit.



SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Work should never begin without obtaining and understanding the proper safe work procedure (SWP). According to the contractor’s SWP, all electrical lines must be located, painted and properly barricaded until the correct procedure is identified and put in place.
- When disturbing concrete, treat all underground utility lines as if they are 0-2ft deep, regardless of GPR readings. GPR scans can be distorted by a range of environmental factors and may not show exact depths.

MOST IMPORTANT TAKE AWAY

Ensure all safe work procedures and site-specific requirements are clearly communicated to ALL contractors and subcontractors before ANY work begins.

Also ensure there is adequate company supervision of contractor activities to confirm they are following established procedures such as Job Hazard Analysis.

