



## Collapse of a pole while linesman at work

A serious incident has recently occurred when a contract linesman was working on behalf of a UK DNO. The linesman was removing overhead equipment from a pole when it subsequently collapsed. It is reported that the linesman fell with the pole, and hit an adjacent shed before being himself then hit by the falling pole. The linesman required hospital treatment and has sustained a fractured hip.

Thorough investigations are still being completed to ascertain the full reasons for the incident, and further information will be communicated once this process is complete. The image below shows that the pole was situated in a ditch with an adjacent sloping bank.



The incident serves as an important reminder to all staff involved in climbing pole to undertake the following basic procedures prior to work:

1. Carry out a thorough visual inspection of the pole, checking for any indications of impaired strength or visual defects.
2. Assess the surrounding ground conditions to ensure that the ground is stable, and that the pole appears to have been planted to the correct depth, and make small excavations at the base of the pole if required.
3. Carry out a hammer test to “sound” the pole for signs of internal decay, by lightly tapping the pole using a hammer, starting from the ground level.
4. Carry out a probe test using a pointed implement, for signs of external decay, again starting from ground level, at any points where decay is suspected.

**If there is any doubt as to the integrity of any pole STOP work immediately and seek further advice.**

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