



## Welcome to HSE Matters, our new style newsletter.

**We want this to be informative and readable, whilst focusing on some of our key Health, Safety and Environmental issues. As such we will be including information on our performance, presenting some examples of good practice or technology, highlighting some of our most recent incidents and learning what we need to take from these.**

This newsletter is as much yours as it is ours and we would be delighted to receive contributions to future editions from across the company. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of the HS&E team with anything you think will help improve safety or the environment within Barhale.



Peter Dobson  
Director of Health, Safety and Environment

### What is in our first edition?

You may recall the MindSafety training programme which reminds all Barhale people to encourage positive behaviour in seeking improved performance. We are pleased to report some examples of good practice from around the business. For example, our Northern team has come up with a novel use for fall arrest mats as noise barriers! Meanwhile, Southern Business Unit has started using improved equipment such as eco-cabins and utilising swing arm fall arrest systems for loading and unloading.

However, in 2008 we suffered 10 RIDDOR reportable injuries, over 100 minor injuries and 8 significant environmental incidents. We must learn from these to prevent future occurrences and we have examples from key incidents.

Last year you provided us with a tremendous number of near misses (over 6000 safety and 1000 environmental), of these falls from height and slips, trips and falls were amongst the most frequently reported, therefore we have summarised some learning associated with these.



### What is coming up

We are planning a HS&E conference in September where representatives from across Barhale, as well as key people who have an interest in us, can focus on our good practice and what we can do to get better. Shortly we will be asking for nominations for those in Barhale who have improved our safety and environmental reputation as we want to recognise your contribution.

We will be looking to mark World Environment Day on June 5th with a

series of events. This year the theme is climate change. As you will see with our eco-cabins, some good initiatives are already in place so we will be looking to build upon these as part of our wider programme to reduce our carbon emissions and adapt to climate change.

European Week of Health and Safety in October is always recognised in Barhale and the theme of risk assessment will support our own strategy to improve in this area.

## Good practice from around the regions

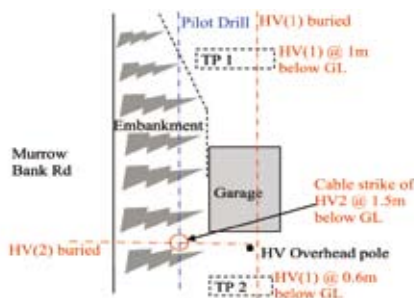
### Directional drilling and buried service hazards



The most at risk stages are the beginning and end (30m or so) of the drill, where the drill passes from ground level through the “service zone” to the pipe invert depth, typically 1.5m deep or more (photo above). Good practice requires us to not just trial hole up to the 1st and last manholes on the run but trial beyond the shot entry and exit points into the ground.

The reamer, an attachment used to expand the hole when pulling the pipes through, must be removed in the last manhole before pulling through to ground level, as the zone of disruption around the reamer is significant, and worsens as depth decreases - posing more of a threat to services. The drill does not actually have to strike the service to cause a strike, as a near miss usually disrupts them sufficiently to cause damage.

Where the drill crosses significant services, then a trial hole must be used to prove depth of service at that point regardless of other investigation, see sketch of recent HV cable strike (below). Never assume that drill depths of greater than 1.2m below surface are going to be below the “service zone” and therefore do not require investigating.



### Fall arrest – loading and unloading

Barhale Southern are currently using a swing arm fall arrest system for loading and unloading lorries. It is a very simple yet effective design that consists of a weighted base that supports the swing arm. An inertia reel clips onto a harness that supports the user in the event of a fall. In the picture there are two swing arms in place, providing cover the full length of the delivery vehicle, although the system may be just as effective with one. This has proven to be very effective where all loading and unloading is done in one area. Several units may be required if there are many delivery areas and may not be cost effective for all projects. For more information go to: [Brandontoolhire.co.uk](http://Brandontoolhire.co.uk)



### Man riders – davit lifts

As excavators have now been completely banned for man riding duties, an affordable practical alternative is required at sites where a crane is not practical. Though this may not be suitable in all applications Speedy Lifting offer a counter balance davit lifter that works in a similar way as a tripod. It is a very portable unit that can be erected very quickly and easily by two or more persons. At present we are using this davit as part of our rescue apparatus on a hand jack. Primary access and egress is by way of a ladder via a landing, and rescue via the davit and a rescue stretcher or harness. This is a very affordable unit that could negate the need of an expensive crane hire in some cases. For information go to: [Speedyhire.com/Lifting](http://Speedyhire.com/Lifting)

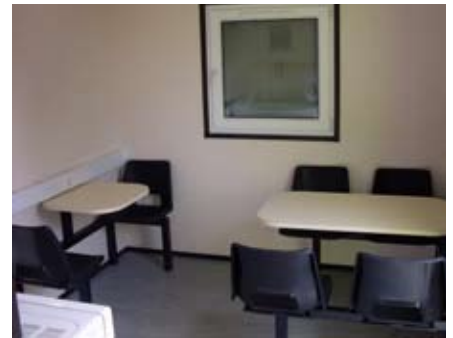
### Eco-cabins

Barhale Southern have found a greener alternative to welfare units that will not only reduce cost through solar energy but also reduce our carbon footprint by reducing emissions and fuel use. The unit has all the features that would be expected including hot and cold running water, toilet and washing facilities, integral waste and water tank, kitchen area including energy efficient cooler/fridge box, drying room, PIR controlled lighting, central heating system, time controlled (ducted warm air), double glazing and vandal guards on windows. Some of these features surpass what we currently use but the solar panels from

which the unit gets its energy is by far its most impressive feature. Feedback on how user friendly and the longevity of the power supply from solar panels will follow in the near future.

The unit is being trialled at the Clova Road project in East London.

**Further information**  
**[Cartercabinhire.co.uk](http://Cartercabinhire.co.uk)**



### Belt and braces on spills

On a Scottish site a bowser and generator has been set up on plant nappies and a travel spill kit attached, this is what we like to see.



### Noise

Northern teams are using a gas powered welfare unit, to help keep the noise down in residential areas.

To reduce nuisance to local residents fall-arrest mats, normally used to assist during deliveries, make improvised noise barriers. However, a word of warning, although made from fire resistant material they must be given a 30cm clearance from the equipment to reduce risk of fire.



### Avoiding slips trips and falls

On one of our Northern schemes with a compact site, a bespoke joinery and steel fixing area has been set up with a concrete base poured to ensure the area remains as tidy as possible to assist in the control of slips, trips and falls.

### Permit to overpump

On one of our schemes in Kilmarnock, the site team have ensured the client representative gives permission to use the foul sewer and signs off the process with a plan of both the area sewers and drainage, thereby preventing previous incidents where we have accidentally over pumped into surface water drains. We are also using the Barhale permit to pump process for this operations. However, good practice has been demonstrated as in addition, our team have requested that the client signs off our own permits to pump.

# Learning from around the regions



## Modified quick hitch

A mounting bracket for a breaker was found to be incompatible with the excavators quick hitch. A visiting engineer decided to grind 10mm off the bracket to 'make it fit'. Spotted by a sharp eyed employee it was removed from use.

### Learning

- Site Agents / Foremen must ensure visiting plant repair engineers provide a detailed report for the work undertaken, and ensure major modifications are carried out off site.
- There must be confirmation that associated attachments are in line with manufacturer's recommendations, and compatible with the equipment in question.

## Slips trips and falls

In 2008, 3 of our 10 RIDDOR injuries and 30% of all reported near misses were associated with slips, trips and falls.

### Learning

- Clear up spillages immediately and report it.
- Avoid causing trailing cables and air lines. Route these outside of work areas where safe to do so.
- Store goods safely and put tools away.
- Mark all slopes and changes of ground levels on walkways etc.
- Ensure you have adequate lighting at all times.
- Wear the correct footwear and PPE



## Water pollution

Following an excavation dewatering activity where water was pumped too quickly for the settlement tank to successfully remove the solid particles a watercourse was polluted.

### Learning

- Everyone must be made aware of the environmental consequences of their activities.
- Discharges must be frequently monitored and if controls are not working activities must cease until the problem is resolved.
- All discharges must be approved.



## Cable strike

An 11KVA electric cable was struck by an excavator bucket whilst cleaning the bottom of an excavation. Both the operator and banksman failed to anticipate the bucket position in relationship to the exposed cable.

### Learning

- Banksman must ensure no mechanical plant or equipment enters within 500mm (as a minimum) of any exposed electric cables. Other services may have greater exclusion zones which will be confirmed by the utility owner.
- Site agents must ensure banksman and machine operators are clear about their roles and responsibilities and follow company procedures.

## Falls from height

### Learning

- During any operation working at height, an assessment of the risk must be undertaken, identifying suitable controls which are to be clearly communicated.
- Where possible remove the need to climb unstable structures by ensuring that ladders are only handled in single sections. Ensure that all workmen undertaking coupling/ uncoupling operations when extending or retracting ladders wear suitable fall arrest equipment.



## Otters

Working under a licence to work in close proximity to otter habitats, due to design changes and poor weather, rules set out in the licence were not met which resulted in us receiving a warning from the Scottish Government.

### Learning

When working under any licence issued by a regulator, work must be allocated to an experienced senior member of the project team to ensure that the conditions are fully complied with.

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