



**THINK SAFE
STAY SAFE**



**Tilhill
Forestry**

BSWGROU**P** member of **binderholz** ■

SAFETY AND ASSURANCE BULLETIN

INSIST ON SAFETY

JULY 2024

Jumpers for Goal Posts

The Euro football championships are in full swing and we have had two reports in recent weeks of damage to goal posts from passing machinery, so it seemed a good opportunity to remind ourselves of the requirements for goal posts. For clarity jumpers are not sufficient in either a forest or European Championship context!

The HSE guidance document that addresses overhead powerlines is called "Avoiding danger from overhead power lines" and has the reference number GS6. This is why network operators refer to

measuring the height of lines as a GS6. In forestry we also have FISA 804 Electricity at Work: Forestry.

In both of these documents planning is the key factor. The first step in risk management is to eliminate the risk. Can passing under overhead lines be avoided? Where it can't be avoided it leaves us having to manage the risk. This is best done by planning to minimise the number of times we have to pass under the overhead power lines and controlling how and where we do so.

continued



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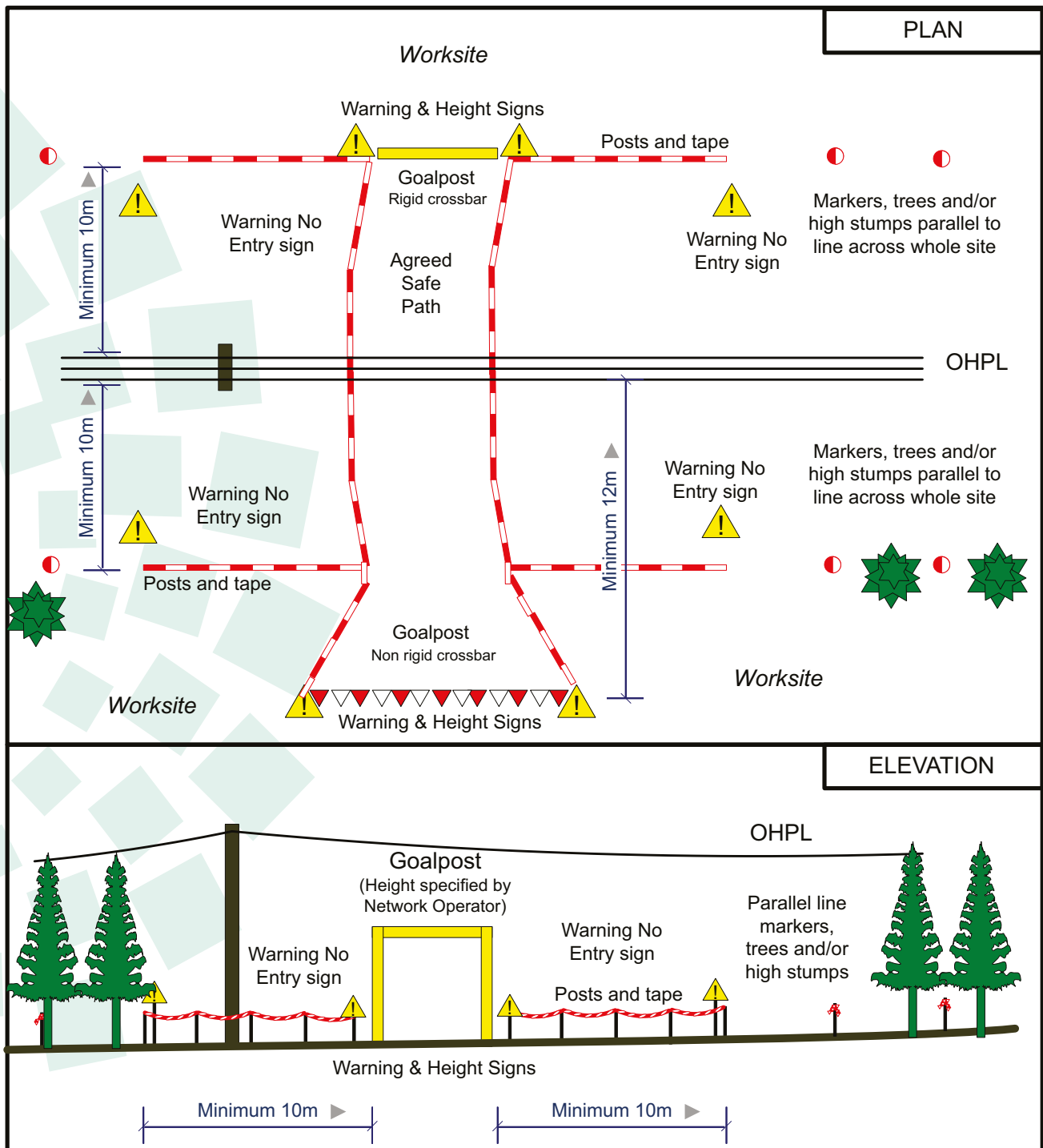
How ever the goal posts are constructed they must be inspected regularly.

The accepted approach to this is the use of goal posts and warning signs stating the height of the goal post. The height is set by the network operator after they have measured the height of the line and allowed the appropriate safety distance. This varies based on voltage and must only be measured by the network operator.

The goal posts won't stop a vehicle or machine hitting an overhead powerline, but act as visual reminder and height

check to help reduce the risk significantly. There is no standard construction for goal posts, but wherever possible they should have a solid cross bar. Only where the span is too wide for a solid cross bar should rope and bunting combined be used.

How ever the goal posts are constructed they must be inspected regularly to ensure they remain intact and serviceable. Keeping a record of the inspection, including a photo is good practice.



Machine Fires

Over the summer months reports of machine fires normally increase. These are often caused by dried forest debris building up in voids in machines, mixed with leaked oil or hydraulic fluid. We featured two fires in the July 2023 bulletin and have experienced machine fires on sites already this year.

Inspect your machines, give them a thorough clean down and ensure the onboard and portable fire extinguisher systems are serviced and ready for use. The onboard can help prevent the total loss of a machine, and the portable can be required to make a safe exit from the cab.

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Good Call Award

The Good Call Award for May 2024 has been presented to a planting contractor Peter Campbell. Peter was working on site when he found an item of unexploded ordnance (UXO). He withdrew from the area and reported it immediately, preventing others from entering the area.

Once reported to Tilhill Forestry staff, they contacted the Police who arranged for an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit to inspect the UXO. They deemed it to still be live and detonated it with a controlled explosion.

Thank you Peter for your vigilance.

Our Good Call Award is judged by a panel of 5, with all reports taken into consideration. This includes Health, Safety, Wellbeing, Environment and Quality reports. To be considered for the award all you have to do is report your near misses, close calls, concerns etc.



Peter Campbell

In the News Elsewhere

Recycling company fined after workers exposed to wood dust

A wood recycling company has been fined after the long-term health of workers was put in danger due to excessive exposure to the dust their work created.

The waste and recycling company that specialises in generating biofuel from renewable waste, ran a wood waste recycling centre that processed mixed wood waste, hardwood and softwood into biofuel.

Breathing in wood dust excessively can cause asthma and nasal cancer. In particular, dust from softwood wood dust is a known asthmagen while particles from hardwood are a known carcinogen.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspector visited the site to investigate the dust exposures on the site. A few weeks earlier, concerns had been raised about wood dust spreading to the surrounding area.

HSE said that its inspector wrote in detail to the company with evidence demonstrating the extent of the wood dust exposure to staff, so that the right action could be taken by the company to control the risks.

The company then provided a detailed response, and it was accepted that

exposures to the surrounding area was in large part due to four storms in quick succession.

However, the HSE found that the control of wood dust to protect employees working on and around the site was not adequate and fell short of the expected benchmark.

The company failed to design and operate processes and activities to minimise emission, release and spread of wood dust. One solution would be through the use of local exhaust ventilation, the enclosure of machinery or the designing of the processes such as using vacuum systems as opposed to compressed air for cleaning and maintenance.

The company were fined £160,000 and ordered to pay £5,310.35 in costs at Court.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector said: "The expected standard is to control exposure to as low a level as is reasonably practicable. We hope this serves to raise industry awareness for the expectation of control of hazardous substances, namely wood dust, in the wood waste and recycling industry."



Photos courtesy of HSE.

Telecommunications company has been fined £1.34 million after an engineer died whilst trying to repair a telephone line.

The engineer died after he slipped and fell into a river and was swept away. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and North Wales Police, found that a number of engineers had been attempting to repair the telephone lines, which ran across the river, over a period of two months. They had been working both near and in the river. At the time of the incident, there had been flooding in the area which meant the river was much higher and faster flowing than usual.

The engineer entered the water and made his way to an island in the middle of the river in order to try and throw a new telephone cable across to the other side by taping it to a hammer and then throwing the hammer. Whilst attempting to cross the remaining section of the river, he slipped in a deeper part and the force of the river swept him away.

The HSE also found that there was no safe system of work in place for work on or near water, nor had the engineers received training, information

or instruction on safe working on or near water.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £1.34 million and ordered to pay costs of £15,858.35 at Court on 5 June.

Speaking after the case, HSE Inspector said: "This was a tragic incident that resulted in the death of a much loved young man. The engineers family, friends and colleagues have always remained in our thoughts. His death would have been preventable had an effective system for working on or near water been in place.

"He should not have been put in the unsafe working situation. Companies should learn the lessons from this incident if they have staff who may work on or near water and be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

**STOP, THINK and ACT
when problems start to
develop and before an
incident happens.**

July 2024 – 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, sustainability, and/or environmental matters:

I have been briefed by: _____ My Tilhill Office is: _____

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

Signed: _____	Name: _____	Date: _____
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ORIGINAL sheet to be held at the Tilhill Office.

Send a **COPY** to: Head of Safety, Tilhill, The Gatehouse, Ruck Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 8EA. 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.