

Safety Alert – 27 March 2015

Power and Gas in Telco Ducts

What happened?

During installation of ducts for the Ultra-Fast Fibre project, a contractor had requested power mark outs. These were completed accurately and when the fibre contractor pot holed, all they could find at the kerb line were green telco ducts. They checked this with their Cat and Genny which indicated power cables were probably inside the ducts. A hammer was used to smash a hole in one of the ducts confirming the presence of power cables. This was then reported to the principal's supervisor who then contacted Chorus.

The Issues:

1. This is the second instance in Hamilton where power has been found installed in Telco ducts. The issue is historic circa 1995-2000 and caused by subdivision developers providing ducts under the roads for power installation. The issue has been masked in one area by the fitting of grey ends to the Telco ducts to hide that green ducts had been used for the road crossing.
2. Telco representative arrived on site and proceeded to cut slots into the ducts with a four inch hand held disk grinder

Recommended actions:

1. Treat all ducts as potentially containing live equipment whether it be power, gas or communications cables.
2. **Reinforce that anyone can stop any job at any stage when they believe there is a risk/hazard presenting itself, including stopping other companies staff.**
3. Telco service provider is investigating issue of the entry methodology to the ducts.
4. The identified ducts have been marked on WEL's GIS with the label (which appears on the service plans) "100 mm duct - in green Telco."
5. Discussion with Chorus over ducting.



Issued by Bill Doig, HSC Manager, WEL Networks