

# Shared Learning



everyone  
home safe  
every day

## Gas pipe struck during drilling – Carnoustie

**Issued to:** Scotland's Railway colleagues & Principal Contractors

**Ref:** SRL23-02L

**Date of issue:** 19/09/2023

**Location:** Carnoustie ECN3 10m 315y

**Contact:** [Chris Lyall, Health & Safety Manager](#)



### Overview

Earlier this year, drilling was being carried out to check ground conditions for a new construction project. During the drilling operation a gas pipe was struck, causing a significant gas release. This meant that the railway had to be closed for 24 hours and surrounding properties evacuated.

The event also had to be reported to the Health & Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

The team received a briefing from their supervisor at another location before traveling to the site of work, without the supervisor.

On arrival, they set up and started to hand dig as a final check for underground services. They hit an obstruction at approximately 0.8m but assumed it was a tree root, so decided to continue with the drilling machine. At this point, they struck a medium pressure plastic mains gas pipe. Scottish Gas Networks and Police Scotland were contacted to manage the event.

### Underlying Causes

- Existing buried services information was available but wasn't included in the Permit to Dig for the site.
- The site team didn't receive a suitable briefing and weren't made aware of the gas pipe and other buried services.
- The Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) scanning wasn't carried out fully and didn't pick up the gas pipe before works.
- The site team decided to drill despite finding an obstruction. There was no site supervisor on site to discuss this with or intervene.

### Key Message

Where would you get buried services information? Are you aware of the process?

**Always** check buried services and other information at the planning stage of works.

How do you check that your plans and permits are suitable and site specific?

**Never** carry out works without suitable plans & permits in place.

Do you have the right level of supervision on your sites?

**Always** 'take 5' and reassess if you notice something unexpected on site.

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