

Date Issued: 19 May 2015

Incident Title: Logger contacts HV line

Event Details:

On Tuesday 16 April 2015, on a farm track near Lawrence, the driver of a logging truck parked his vehicle so that he could secure the load of logs that had just been loaded onto his truck. He threw a chain over the logs and the chain became tangled in the wires of a 11,000 Volt power line running beside the track on which the truck was parked.

The solid connection of the chain with the wires caused the power company's protection system to operate, dropping out supply to the power line. It is likely that the driver would have been killed if he had still been holding the chain when it hit the wires.

If the chain had not connected so solidly with the wires the protection system may not have operated causing the chain and the truck to become energised at 11,000 Volts. The most likely outcome of this would have been the electrocution of the driver, and the truck and its load being completely razed.

The photo on the right is not the incident described above but a similar incident that occurred in the USA.

Note the chain caught on the overhead wires above the load.



Learnings:

1. Drivers of heavy vehicles, particularly logging trucks, need to be aware of the proximity of power lines when securing their loads.
2. In this instance it appears that the risk assessment was inadequate and that appropriate precautions were not taken.

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