

MEDIA RELEASE

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SafeWork NSW



Endeavour
Energy

Don't know, Don't dig worker safety campaign launched

NSW electricity networks and SafeWork NSW have joined forces to launch a new safety campaign to protect construction workers from digging into live electricity cables.

The campaign was developed after a 65% increase in underground cable strikes in the Sydney region over the past two years.

"Finding out what's below ground before excavating can save your life," said Endeavour Energy's General Manager Safety, Human Resources and Environment Andrew Pitman.

"Only one in four workers that reported underground cable strikes over the past two years had Dial-Before-You-Dig plans as required under NSW law.

"This campaign is designed to keep workers safe, prevent damage and disruption to electricity supplies and avoid businesses facing large financial penalties for negligent behavior."

The Don't know, Don't dig campaign is a state-wide collaboration between Endeavour Energy, Ausgrid, Essential Energy, SafeWork NSW and Dial-Before-You-Dig NSW.

It centres on a short educational video to raise awareness and provide workers and employers with practical tips to stay safe and prevent damage to electricity cables.

"Anyone with a job in this state has the right to a safe and healthy workplace, and workplace safety is everyone's responsibility," Acting Deputy Executive Director of SafeWork NSW, Jodie Deakes said.

"Being aware of the risks of electric shock or serious burns from striking live electricity cables while excavating is critical and the message is simple; if you don't know, don't dig.

"I would encourage all construction industry business owners and workers to view the safety video as part of their efforts to create a safety culture in their workplace so that everyone returns home safe at the end of the working day."

Mr Pitman said it was impossible to be too careful about electrical safety and even the most experienced workers need to be vigilant.

"Excavation safety is all about being in the know: knowing the environment, knowing your tools and equipment, and knowing the right steps to take to get the job done safely without causing damage.

"When it comes to working near electricity, knowing the few simple steps outlined by this campaign could save yours or your workers' lives," Mr Pitman said.

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The launch of the Don't know, Don't dig campaign will be held at the Sydney Light Rail construction compound, 6 Driver Place, Moore Park from 10am, Wednesday, 22 March 2017.