SHES Bulletin 173

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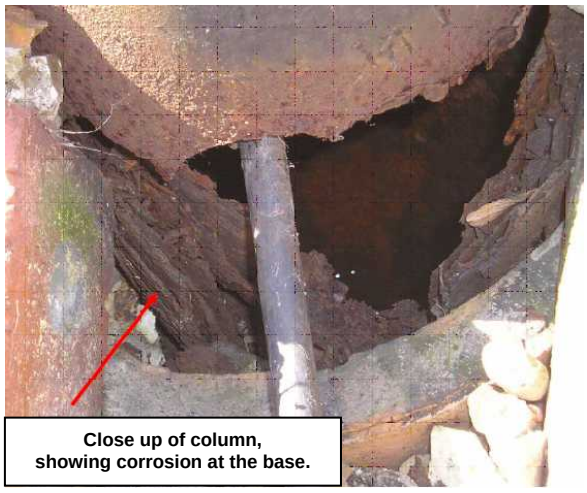
Lighting Column Corrosion



Close up of column, showing corrosion at the base.

INCIDENT

During routine maintenance checks by Scotia Gas on the site lighting at Tatsfield AGI a lighting column collapsed whilst in the down position. On further investigation it was found that the base of the column had corroded internally. This type of column was installed some 25 -30 years ago and is not mounted on a concrete base but in a buried vertical shaft/sleeve. Water had gathered in the shaft and the post had corroded below ground level. On checking other columns on the site it was apparent that some of the other lighting columns were in a similar condition. This could have had serious safety implications had the column snapped in the process of being lowered.

ACTION

The condition of lighting columns should be assessed before any work is carried out on a lighting column or before a column is lowered.

Should the condition of the column indicate that there is a risk of failure, maintenance on the lighting column should be postponed until either the necessary remedial work has been completed or a detailed survey has confirmed that the column is safe.

Even if there are no obvious signs that corrosion has taken place, increased care should be taken when lowering lighting columns as any internal corrosion may be difficult to detect when the column is upright. After the lowering jack has been attached, care should be taken to stand away from the direction in which the column is being lowered. Once the lighting column has been lowered re-inspect the column.

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For further information regarding this Bulletin please contact your Line Manager or Neil Jackson