

## SAFETY ALERT

# SA-224 – Old Building Hazards

### INCIDENT OVERVIEW

There has recently been 3 potentially serious Near Miss incidents that have occurred on the PFM Victorian School Building Authority contract while subcontractors have been working within old buildings. Whilst these incidents are associated with working in old schools, much of our operations are conducted on customer sites within older type buildings, where similar hazards exist. The learnings are therefore applicable to other works conducted within old building types across Programmed operations.

The near miss situations specifically relate to a falling object (brick) from within a roof / ceiling space and two occurrence associated with exposure to unknown live electrical components.

*Near Miss 1 - workers were removing a water damaged ceiling when a brick that was stored in the ceiling cavity fell, just missing a worker's head. The bricks had been stored in the ceiling space for several years and were not known to be located there by the school or Programmed.*



*Near Miss 2 & 3 – workers were removing weatherboard cladding with crow bars when they discovered unknown old live electrical wiring beneath the surface*



### WHAT CAN BE DONE DIFFERENTLY TO PREVENT A SIMILAR INCIDENT FROM OCCURRING?



HOUSEKEEPING & ORDER

- ▶ Complete housekeeping and site inspections when working in old buildings to ensure all potential hazards are identified and controlled prior to and during works



POSITIONS OF PEOPLE

- ▶ Ensure that exclusion zones below are established when work is being carried out above.



PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- ▶ Ensure PPE suitable for the task is worn to minimise the risk of injury such as safety glasses and hard hats particularly when work is being performed above



RULES & PROCEDURES

- ▶ Complete risk assessments for works and ensure all potential hazards are considered especially when dealing with old, unknown structures. e.g. Unexpected items falling when work is being performed or old / hidden services when performing destructive works
- ▶ If destructive work is being performed, ensure all steps are taken to identify and isolate energy sources before commencing work

For more information regarding this incident please contact:

<b>HSE Representative:</b>	Gwendolyn Putt
<b>Contact Number:</b>	0402 330 087
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	25/06/2020 (Iss.2)

## Report all incidents and near misses

Please display on Safety Noticeboards and raise this matter at the next Toolbox Talk or Safety Meeting.