

Industry Safety Alert

GAS Explosion

A road marking operative was seriously injured in an unexpected explosion whilst undertaking routine white lining activities on the A23 Brixton Road, London.

The explosion occurred when the operative pushed a pedestrian thermoplastic pram (manually operated, gas fed pram which has a naked flame) towards a BT chamber, which had become contaminated with natural gas. It is now known that the naked flame on the pram ignited the gas which had built-up within the BT chamber causing a significant explosion, which blew the operative to the ground, partially ripping off items of his PPE, trousers, jacket and gloves.

The blast was large enough to expel both sections of a two part heavy duty ductile iron cover a considerable distance, narrowly missing the employee and a passing vehicle. The injured person was part of a two man road marking team, and sustained serious burns to his torso, arms, wrists, hands and slightly lesser burns to his legs.



The IP's PPE following the Incident

Until further notice the following **MUST** take place:

- Take extra care during the initial site risk assessment and consider the potential presence of gas.
- Stop or do not commence any hot works where there is a suspected gas leak (odour or noise)
- All lining works near ironworks **MUST** be applied by hand.
- Flame retardant PPE (including trousers) **MUST** be worn at all times when conducting any works which involve a naked flame.

All personnel are also reminded to report 'Near Hit' incidents, no matter how minor they may appear, including any suspected gas leaks (odour or noise).

Glyn Williams
Senior SHE Manager

Learning: No Repeats