

ASP Safety Alert

Electrical Safety & Authorisations



Alert Number: SA11_18

Subject: Failed Insulation Piercing Connector (IPC) Neutral

9 August 2018

Key Messages

Insulation Piercing Connectors (IPCs) are single use components only. Never re-use an IPC under any circumstances as this may result in failure of the connection with the potential for electric shock.

Description of incident or hazard:

A member of the public recently received a suspected electric shock when they touched a metal Colorbond gate at their premises.

Ausgrid attended site to investigate the incident and found an open circuit on the neutral conductor which was caused by a failure of the IPC on the customer's service mains. A copper water pipe and brass tap assembly was found to be screwed into the Colorbond fence adjacent to the gate, creating a return path for the neutral current and voltage to be present on the gate.

Further investigation revealed that the IPC was not directly connected to the service mains but was instead connected using a tunnel or service connector, indicating that it had at some stage been re-used.

Extent of impact:

The failed IPC was replaced and the installation tested to ensure no further faults were present. The member of public involved attended hospital for observation and tests before being released.

Immediate action taken (or to be taken) to eliminate or control the risk:

All ASPs are reminded that IPCs are single use components only and should never be re-used.

When performing low voltage overhead connections all materials used must be new, as outlined in the relevant Network Standards (NS124 – NS125).

If you or your employees have any questions, please email ASPLLevel2@ausgrid.com.au.

Ausgrid

Project Officers