

HAZARD ALERT

Rain causes sudden rope movement.



Background:

A hauler crew was undertaking a tower recertification. The tower was down with all ropes slack on the ground. Approximately 15metres of skyline was coiled on the ground at the end of the tower.

The skyline had been stationery on the ground and thought to be in a zero energy state for approximately 2.5 hours before the incident. No one was working in the cut over or on the tail-hold machine.

The crew manager and a supervisor were looking at the site and around the hauler during a heavy rain shower. As they went to step over the skyline on the ground the rain triggered the skyline to suddenly move and instantly tighten up. The crew manager had stepped over the rope and jumped forward unhurt.

The supervisor was caught mid stride; causing him to be picked up by his legs and thrown to the ground. He was transported to hospital with severe bruising, swelling and grazing to his legs and hip.

The engineer who was inspecting the tower dogs at the time had his ladder knocked from under him but held onto the hauler and was unhurt.

Learning from this incident:

- Ensure all ropes are secured in a zero energy state; being on the ground in a steep setting is not sufficient. Secure slack ropes to the hauler or other machine where possible to prevent any possible movement.
- Avoid stepping over slack stationery ropes where possible.
- Be aware of the effects the environmental conditions can have on the work area.