

Recall of Under Desk Heating Mats

Faulty Electrical Cable

This Safety Alert highlights the risk of not performing regular inspections, testing and tagging on electrical equipment.

BACKGROUND

A contractor was installing network cables within an office space, when he leaned against a heating mat cable still plugged into an electrical board (see pictures below). The contractor leaned against the cable with his head and sustained an electric shock to his temple.



Photo 1: Faulty cable



Photo 2: Heating Mat

The electric shock was caused by a combination of the following factors:

- The switch along the cable comes apart very easily, exposing electrical wires, which appeared to have occurred in this instance.
- Faulty electrical cables (i.e. attached to the mat).
- The testing and tagging was out of date.

WHAT WAS DONE WELL

- Heat mats were recalled from the area and disposed of immediately.
- Contractor management was performed well by IT. Safe Work Procedures, Inductions and Insurance were all completed.
- IT was immediately available to deal with the situation and the contractor was provided treatment at Prince of Wales hospital.

ACTION FOR LOCAL AREAS TO TAKE

Level 3 Health and Safety Committees, in cooperation with local staff, are requested to

- Send out this Safety Alert and recall any under desk heating mats within their areas.
- Review all electrical testing and tagging in their areas and if it's due, please organise to have testing and tagging conducted.

Further information:

Contact your Faculty Health and Safety Coordinator
www.safety.unsw.edu.au

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