

Electrical Distribution Safety

TECHNICAL AWARENESS – SOIL TAMPING AROUND POLES

A number of DDIs are highlighting issues with respect to soil settling around poles. This Bulletin supplies information that LDCs can use to ensure poles are installed as per the approved standard. The use of a tamping bar or power tamper when installing poles may be required to ensure that sufficient compaction is achieved to prevent issues with soil settling. The settling of soil can cause the safety barrier/clearance of the soil to change and as a result cause your standards not to be met.



ISSUES ARISING FROM SOIL SETTLING

LDC approved standards contain a depth of setting for poles that is to be met. In addition, if the pole contains a riser there is also a depth below grade requirement. While the initial installation may meet the standards, with the occurrence of soil settling safety barriers/clearances can be compromised with the passage of time.

Latest Requirements:

CSA 22.3 No.1-10 – 4.2.4.2 Mechanical protection of supply cables states “Riser cables of supply systems shall be protected by a covering that provides suitable mechanical protection for the full length of the run, starting at least 0.3 m below the surface of the earth.

And the older:

CSA 22.3 No.7-94 – 3.5.6.2 Mechanical Protection of Supply Cables states “All riser cables of supply systems shall be protected by a covering that gives suitable mechanical protection for the full length of the run from at least 0.3 m below the surface of the earth.

ESA RECOMMENDS

ESA recommends LDCs review with crews the approved standards and/or LDC installation practices with staff, with respect to pole installations. ESA recommends that backfill around poles be thoroughly tamped as backfill is added around the pole. ESA recommends ensuring that backfill minimizes the use of organic material (ex. leaves, wood waste, vegetation, etc...), ice, snow, large rocks or frozen material.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Information requests and follow-up may be directed to ESA at Utility.Regulations@ElectricalSafety.on.ca. For questions on this bulletin please be prepared to quote Bulletin “DIB-08/12”.