

17th July 2009

No: IGS 200

Infrastructure Group Safety Bulletin

Awareness of Adders

Incident - 4th July 2009 at 15:30

While in the process of setting out a Safe System of Work, two members of staff were walking in the Cess at Ramsden near Wickford to reach their designated positions. One of the two men, the injured party, jumped when he felt a sharp pain in his leg. His colleague noticed the adder close by.

The IP was taken to hospital where he received treatment for a snake bite to his right leg, just above his boot.



Male Adder

How to identify an Adder:

Adders grow to about 60cm in length. They have a bold dark zigzag pattern on their back and the body colour is usually creamy yellow to grey in males and reddish brown in females.

If you find an Adder:

Avoid it and allow the animal to make its own escape. Do not touch or move it. Adders will generally make for cover as soon as they are disturbed.

Do NOT pick up or handle an adder, be cautious when working in areas where adders are likely to be present (e.g. rough grassland, scrub, conifer plantations, piles of wood or rubble etc). They are also often found basking in open areas such as on ballast & cess paths.

If bitten, keep calm, report the incident and go to the nearest hospital.

If you see an adder please tell your supervisor so that the location can be passed to your team for information.

Issued by Martin Frobisher, Head of Infrastructure Maintenance Safety & Compliance (martin.frobisher@networkrail.co.uk)