

Vehicle rolling incidents

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Applicable to	All drivers

A number of near misses have recently occurred where unattended Electricity North West vehicles have rolled from their parked position after the handbrake has been applied. This Safety Bulletin provides the latest guidance on securely parking vehicles and supersedes Safety Bulletin SB02/2018.

Handbrakes can fail due to several reasons such as if they are not applied sufficiently, if they are poorly adjusted or if the brakes are hot when the handbrake is applied. If one of these situations applies, when the brakes cool down they shrink slightly which can be just enough to reduce the grip of the handbrake. This can then result in a parked vehicle moving.

To prevent any further incidents, **avoid parking on inclines where possible**. If it is necessary to park on an incline, the following best practice should be adopted:

Applying the handbrake

With the vehicle stationary and the engine running, depress the footbrake and fully apply the handbrake (by doing this you will benefit from the power assistance given by the engine on the braking system).

Direction of parked vehicle

Park facing towards the direction of traffic flow unless in a recognised parking space, so other drivers can identify that the van is stationary. Always confirm the handbrake is applied firmly before leaving the vehicle.

Gear safety

When parking facing uphill, manual vehicles should be placed in first gear. This will keep the engine engaged and prevent the vehicle from rolling. If driving an automatic vehicle, put the van in the park setting. If parking facing downhill, place the vehicle in the reverse gear before applying handbrake.

Parking facing downhill

Turn the front wheels towards the kerb and place the vehicle in reverse gear. This will prevent the vehicle from rolling into traffic, avoiding the highway should the brakes become disengaged.

Parking facing uphill with a kerb

If parked uphill, turn the wheels to the right towards the road. If the parking brakes fail and the van rolls backwards, the front tire will hit the kerb and stop the vehicle rolling backwards further.

Parking facing uphill without a kerb

When parked facing uphill and there is no kerb, turn the wheels to the left. If the parking brakes fail, the vehicle will roll out the way of the road and oncoming traffic.

