



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 99-11

DRILL PIPE SLIPS

WHAT HAPPENED:

1. Incident No. 1 – Employee caught his hand between the drill pipe slips and the elevators during a trip in the hole. Injury sustained included a cut across palm and top of the hand. All three crewmembers were setting the slips into place. The slips apparently hung on the side of the bushings and caused them to tip the rear handle forward.
2. Incident No. 2 – Employee caught his hand between the drill pipe slips and the elevators during a trip in the hole. Injury sustained included amputation of the index finger and cut across the top of the hand. All three crewmembers were setting the slips into place. The injured employee, holding the rear handle, apparently pushed the slips toward the bushings before the other two employees started pulling the slips. The rear handle swung upward and the employee's hand was caught between the handle and the elevators.

FACTS RESULTING FROM THE INVESTIGATION:

1. The crew consisted of a mixture of relief and regular crew.
2. The rig was not being run at an excessive speed.
3. All three crewmembers were setting the slips into place.
4. In the first incident, the slips apparently hung on the side of the bushings and caused them to tip the rear handle upward. In the second incident, the injured employee pushed the slips before the other two employees started pulling on the slips.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

1. Three crewmembers were used to set the slips into position, adding to the exposure to hand or finger injuries.
2. Position of the slips prior to setting them.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

The contractor involved in the two incidents issued the following recommendations:

1. Pull slips in from the drawworks side of the table.
2. Use two persons to pull slips in. DO NOT USE THE REAR HANDLE WHILE SETTING THE SLIPS. Always grip slip handles with the palms up.
3. Drillers should use extra caution when working new or relief personnel.

The Corrective Actions stated in this alert are one company's attempts to address the incident, and do not necessarily reflect the position of IADC or the IADC HSE Committee.

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