



# Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

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ALERT 99-16

## LADDER SAFETY

### WHAT HAPPENED:

A fiberglass A-frame ladder split halfway up the ridge of the leg rail, causing a worker on the ladder to fall to the rig floor. The employee injured his wrist.

### WHAT CAUSED IT:

An investigation showed the ladder appeared to be in good shape and not misused. It appeared to be a lighter shade than the other ladders on location, suggesting that it had been left out in the sun. When the ladder was standing alone, without weight on it, the split was extremely hard to see. Other ladders were inspected and some were found to have short splits in the ridge of the leg rail near the foot, in the upper 2/3 near the spreader brace, and cracks were found around the rivets of the spreader brace and the metal foot. All ladders were capable of supporting 250 lbs. and were of Heavy Duty Industrial grade Type I.

A purchase record was run and it was found that all of the ladders were purchased new in February of 1997. A research of the rig audits was conducted and found to have included an inspection of all ladders as late as September of 1998. The inspection approved all ladders for service.

### CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

1. Replace all Type I ladders with Type IA Extra Heavy Duty Industrial Grade.
2. Workers should inspect ladders for damage before use to include pulling channels in a spreading motion while looking for splits.
3. Store fiberglass ladders in a protected environment to protect from the sun, chemicals and damage.

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**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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