



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 11 – 24

THREE DROPPED-OBJECT INCIDENTS OCCUR WHILE TRIPPING OUT OF THE HOLE

WHAT HAPPENED:

Three incidents resulted in separate dropped-object incidents. They are:

1. While the driller was picking up the pipe in the slips, the hydraulic hose on the elevators came loose and the elevators opened.
2. During a trip out of the hole the driller was in the process of setting back a stand of pipe and he opened the hydraulic elevators before the stand was fully set back. This resulted in dropping the stand on the rig floor.
3. Following jarring operations, when pulling out of the hole, the cover on the elevator hydraulic fittings came loose and fell toward the floor. The derrickman noticed the cover had moved and caught it!

WHAT CAUSED IT:

1. Quick connect fittings were substituted for the original equipment swivel connections on the hoses.
2. Inadequate procedure: A new procedure required the Driller to not touch the open switch until the stand touches the pipe rack.
3. The cover did not have a safety strap in place as did the Off-Driller's Side cover. Jarring took place for several days before a comprehensive inspection of the top drive took place.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company did the following:

- Remember to use the original equipment recommended by the manufacturer.
- Substituting equipment may cause serious consequences (as in the case of the quick connect vs. the swivel connect). In this case, the elevators came open while "picking up" the pipe that was still in the slips. The elevators could easily have opened up, thereby dropping a stand on someone's foot or dropping a string down the hole.
- Hydraulic elevators are nice technology with built-in conveniences; yet there are some problems that are being highlighted, such as inadvertently opening them while they are suspending pipe. In this case, the elevator's "open" function was activated and the pipe could have fallen on someone's foot.
- Top drives and auxiliary equipment vastly increase the number of potential "derrick apples" (things that can fall on floor-hands); so be sure to examine top drives daily for potential falling objects.

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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