



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 07 – 11

SERIOUS INJURY RESULTS FROM FALL FROM LADDER

WHAT HAPPENED:

The injured person (IP) was involved in a maintenance campaign on light fittings. While reinstalling a light fitting the IP fell from a ladder to the ground.

The IP had climbed up the extension ladder to collect a screwdriver he left on a beam above the safety shower light fitting. While he was at the beam he noticed two other tools (shifting spanner, etc.). He decided to carry these down to his tool bag on the ground. He then commenced descending the ladder with the screwdriver in one hand and the other tools in his other hand using only his fingertips on the ladder. While descending the ladder, he lost his balance when his foot slipped from the ladder rung. He was unable to maintain a grip on the ladder and fell backwards.

The IP landed on his buttocks and then continued falling backwards hitting his head. He was knocked unconscious. IP suffered fractures to 4 vertebrae in his lower back.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

- The IP originally was using a step ladder to perform the task but due to the uneven nature of the ground decided to use an extension ladder that could be secured to the pipe work.
- The PTW and JSA covered the use of step ladder and Elevated Work Platform (EWP) only.
- The EWP was available but could not be used due limited access.
- The IP knew of the “three (3) points contact rule, but failed to apply the rule when using the ladder.

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

- Reiterated through tool box / safety meetings the importance of the three (3) points of contact rule when using ladders.
- Issued a Standing Order regarding the use of ladders.
- Included a Standing Order on use of ladders in the next revision of safe procedures manual.

IADC Note: See the “Safe Use of Ladders” in the IADC Safety Topic Book. Also see Section 16 and Section 20 of the IADC HSE Reference Guide.

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.

This material is presented for information purposes only. Managers & Supervisors should evaluate this information to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices

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