



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 01-18

Tail Rope and Drill Pipe Incident

WHAT HAPPENED:

While tripping pipe into the hole, a rotary helper's shoulder was injured while he was handling a stand of drill pipe as it was moved from the setback area. The injured employee received a shoulder strain. Fortunately, the injured only needed minor medical attention and returned to work. The incident was classified as a first aid case.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

At the time of this incident, the drill pipe was being moved from the setback area to the rotary table without the aid of a tail rope. The injured worker was standing on the rotary table catching the stands of pipe as they were passed to him. In his attempt to stop a stand of pipe, his shoulder was injured.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

Handling tubulars is one of the most frequent reasons for injuries to personnel on the rig. Procedures/equipment have been developed that actually move personnel further away from the moving tubulars and require less physical exertion to perform the work.

- **Tail rope:** One of the main reasons for using a tail rope is to maintain control of the pipe without having to use your body to do it. Any time the human body is pitted against several hundred pounds of moving steel, the body will eventually lose the battle.
 - A tail rope, anchored at one end to a solid structure, reduces the forces of the moving pipe on the person tailing the pipe. In this way there is less chance of a pulled shoulder joint and the pipe can be better controlled before it gets to the person who is to stab it.
 - A tail rope should be used when moving tubulars (drill pipe, collars, casing or tubing) in from the V-door.
 - A tail rope should be used when tailing drill pipe or collars from the set back area. In addition to giving the person tailing the pipe better control, it allows him to keep his feet further out of harms way should a stand be snagged.
- Use the appropriate procedures / equipment to prevent injuries.
- Remember, review the job, talk out the concerns, address the concerns, then start the work.

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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Issued June 2001