



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 01 – 37

MAN DOWNED BY H₂S GAS

WHAT HAPPENED:

During a pump down stripping job, a Well Service Rig worker was overcome by H₂S. When the well came in, he was trying to install the stabbing valve to stop flow. Rig operations were suspended immediately and the affected person was transported to the hospital.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

It was determined from the investigation that the individuals had not received sufficient training and were not aware of the serious hazards associated with H₂S, or emergency procedures.

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

- Re-instituted H₂S Safety Training requirements for all personnel who are working at a site that has the potential for H₂S.
- Efforts were made to mitigate against the potential risks associated with exposure hazards (in this case, “live” fluids);
- Required that where exposure hazards (live fluids), that contain, or potentially contain, H₂S, are being handled, exposed personnel should be masked up.
- Required holding and documenting Pre-Job Safety Meetings. These Pre-Job Safety Meetings should:
 - Ensure all personnel know the emergency signals and muster areas (briefing);
 - If there are issues that conflict with the work objectives and safety of the crew, these issues must be resolved before the task goes forward;
 - Recognize the hazards of the working with H₂S.
 - Reinforce evacuation procedures with all personnel.
- Re-emphasized holding H₂S drills on a regular basis whenever working in areas known to have H₂S wells.

See procedures in the IADC Accident Prevention Guide Section 13.0 for further information.

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.