



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 02 – 09

ROPE CAUGHT IN MUD PIT AGITATOR CAUSES RESTRICTED WORK CASE

WHAT HAPPENED:

A derrickman was attempting to remove and reposition a 8mm (3/8") plumb-bob rope line from the active mud tank at the chemical mixing area. The rope was attached to piping above the mud pit and routed down through the pit grating and hung approximately eighteen inches from the agitator shaft. In order to reposition the line the derrickman released the rope from the piping and held the free end of the rope looped in his left hand while he positioned his right hand below the grating to guide the rope. He was attempting to pass the rope back down through the grating to his right hand when the rope became entangled with the agitator shaft causing the rope to pull his left hand down onto the pit grating cover. The rope continued to tighten around his left hand. Using his right hand he was able to free sufficient length of rope back towards his left hand to enable his to free the entrapped hand. Result of the incident – a fractured finger resulting in Restricted Work Case Duties.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

The task was considered low risk and there was no JSA for this procedure. In addition there was an unsafe practice of using a rope near rotating equipment and failing to recognize the potential hazards involved with this practice.

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

- All ropes were removed from the mud pit system.
- An alternative method of mud watch was put into place. (Steel tube & lock nut system.)
- The importance of hazard recognition was discussed with all personnel.
- An Operations Safety Alert was issued to remind other rig crews of the importance of continuously monitoring the workplace for potential unsafe conditions which can be introduced over time.
- A third party company was brought to the rig to perform a hazard hunt looking for other unsafe acts or conditions that might be present.

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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