



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 02 – 48

IMPROPER HOLE COVERING RESULTS IN INJURIES

WHAT HAPPENED:

During a rig move, it was necessary to remove a 3' circle section of grating between the shale shakers. The cut out piece of grating was replaced over the opening by mistake and not welded back in place. Several hours later a roustabout working on the shaker tank stepped on the piece of grating that had been placed over the opening and fell into the tank. He suffered mild back pain and pain in the right ankle. This was a First Aid Case but could have been much worse. There have been similar incidents: One when the Driller fell 50' through the rotary table opening while rigging up Kelly, and another when a floorman fell when he stepped on a piece of metal plating that had been placed over an open section in the rig floor.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

The holes were improperly covered and barriers were not put in place warning personnel of the holes and keeping employees from stepping into them.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

To address this incident, this company issued the following instructions to their rig personnel:

- Never leave holes in grating or decks without covering them immediately or erecting a safety barrier. If holes in grating or decks are not to be used again, permanent repairs shall be made as soon as possible. The safety barrier is to remain in place until the repairs are made.
- If a hole is made in the deck or grating for later use, it is to be covered immediately with a cover that cannot be displaced and / or a safety barrier must be utilized blocking the opening.
- Rig Inspections should be carried out to determine if similar situations exist and all open holes repaired, covered with a secure cover, or barricaded off.
- Temporary barriers for openings large enough for a person to fall through or off of, shall be built with equivalent strength to the handrail protection that is required for permanent landing.
- When applicable, use Fall Protection.

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.