



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 98-10

Pressure Washing Safety

WHAT HAPPENED:

A rig worker was using a high-pressure steam cleaner to wash between the drawworks motors when he slipped and fell. The high-pressure (approx. 2600 psig) nozzle contacted the top of the worker's water-soaked leather boot. The boot was cut open and the worker suffered second- and third-degree burns to the top of his foot.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

It was discovered that the pressure wand had no trigger release valve. The worker was unable to stop the pressure stream after he fell.

Both the soles and the leather uppers on the worker's boots were very worn. The worn soles provided poor traction, creating a slipping hazard. The leather uppers were worn very thin and soft, allowing the pressure stream to cut through the material easily.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

A spring-release trigger should be installed on all high-pressure washer wands, to allow the spray to be cut off immediately. When cleaning greasy and dirty surfaces, use the lowest pressure available.

Work boots should have sufficient tread on the soles to provide adequate traction. Boots should be replaced when the leather uppers begin to deteriorate.

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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