

FATAL ALERT

On January 8, 2015, an employee (Derrick Hand) working for an Oil and Gas Well Servicing company died when the traveling block and the sucker rods that had been removed from the well struck him. The Servicing Rig was preparing to pull out the hanger block to put the tubing slips on.

At the time of the incident, the derrick hand was waiting for the operator to pull up the anchor so he could attach the tubing slips. The operator proceeded without the characteristics/details of the well, and without accurate knowledge of the locking pins in place on the telescoping portion of the servicing rig. Without the well documents, the operator had no way of knowing the actual weight he was lifting. During this process, the telescoping portion of the rig collapsed, causing the traveling block and sucker rod to strike the derrick hand.

Significant Factors

- The derrick hand was a stand in employee.
- The worker failed to identify the hazards present.
- The operator was lacking knowledge of the well.
- The operator failed to brief his stand in employee on the known hazards prior to working.
- There was no system in place to acutely ensure that the telescoping locking pins were in place.
- The operator had not been trained specifically on rig he responsible for operating.
- The employer failed to fix a servicing rig with known mechanical defects.
- The weather was cold enough to affect the rigs hydraulics.
- The sucker rods that had fallen made any potential rescue too dangerous.

Recommendations

- Brief all employees on the facts and circumstances of this incident.
- The employer shall ensure employees operate servicing rigs in accordance with the State of Wyoming Rules and Regulations for Oil and Gas Well Servicing.
- Ensure that stand in employees are properly briefed/trained on the site specific hazards.
- Ensure that operators have accurate well specifications prior to the incipient stages of the job.
- Ensure that operators have been trained by a qualified person prior to operating servicing rigs.
- Implement proper procedures for ensuring that telescoping rigs have been raised and properly locked per manufacture's recommendations.
- The employer shall implement policy and procedure that allow for employees to stop work when rigs are known to have mechanical issues.