

FATALITY ALERT

On August 1, 2013. Employee suffered a severe blow to the left jaw/neck area while attempting to catch a falling submersible well pump assembly, which was falling from a service truck bed located in the shop area of the companies facility. Just prior to the incident the truck/rig operator backed the service rig into the shop. The operator/foreman and the a an another worker proceeded to attempt the removal of the submersible pump from the right side of the service rig deck. The operator who was nearest the front of the rig lifted his end of the pump. The other worker who was near the rear/ which was said to be the heavy end of the pump attempted to grasp the pump from the bed. The worker lost grasp or footing as he lifted the pump from the bed losing his hold and the pump fell. The worker grabbed the falling pump/ which thrust his body sideways into the passenger side of the service rig stake pocket bed. The stake pocket bed was bordered by a 2" steel strap. The worker's body was thrown violently against the edge of the strap steel causing an impact behind his left jaw-TMJ joint area.

The next day the worker arrived at work to work for the day and traveled with his crew/co-workers to a vendor's location. While at this location the employee suffered a witnessed severe stroke, in which his right side showed extensive paralysis. The worker became incoherent and lost noticeable speech. Fire Department and ambulance were summoned and employee was transported to a hospital and later died.

Significant Factors

- In sufficient personnel or resources were used to move/handle the well pump.
- Employee instinctively tried to stop the well pump from falling off the truck bed when he was it starting to fall.
- Normally (1) one pump assembly is transported on a cradle rack of a standard pickup truck. The cradle located on the right side of the truck allows the pump to be carried and lifted at approximately 20 inches from the ground.
- When a second pump is carried, employees typically place it on the right side of the service rig deck at a height of approximately 220 pounds.
- Employer had an unwritten policy that requires 3-4 employees to lift a submersible pump with (3) three employees minimum.
- The operator/foreman allowed a work place practice which was unacceptable.
- The operator and victim were in the shop, at days end. Other employees were in the shop, help was available.
- The nature of the round pump, makes it difficult to grasp, when the entire pump surface is on a flat surface.

- The employees all agreed the pumps should only be carried and loaded/unloaded from the pick-up with truck cradles. This allows for a much lower lift, in which the ends of the pump are exposed for adequate retention.

Recommendations:

- Ensure all employees are trained to recognize the hazards associating with material handling and methods to be used to avoid the hazards.
- Ensure all employees enforce safe lifting policy