

FATAL ALERT

December 29, 2007

On December 29, 2007 a rig hand was fatally injured when he was struck by a blooie line while they were unloading/pumping water from the hole. At the time of the accident the employee had stepped over the blooie line and was walking towards the rig on the right hand side. The driller had the second rig hand open the ball-valve on the compressor which started putting air pressure through the compressor down the tubing into the well casing. Water began unloading from the well through the blooie line into the pit. While the water was running, the blooie line began to kick, and became violent rising and pulling the steel posts that anchored it out of the ground. The blooie line continued to rise and spun towards the front of the rig knocking the first rig hand into the rig truck bed where the first rig hand collapsed against the right side of the rig rear axle. The compressor was immediately shut down by the second rig hand and he immediately started to try and administer first-aid/CPR to the struck first rig hand. The rig operator tried to call for emergency assistance but no cell phone service was able. The rig operator drove to the nearest hill and made the call for medical help.

Significant Factors

- Blooie line was not adequately/properly secured against movement.
- Employer had not developed procedures (Standard Operating Procedures [SOP's] or Job Safety Analysis [JSA's]) or identified potentially dangerous work areas.
- Hazard recognition and avoidance training was lacking and employees were not trained on Wyoming Rules & Regulations for Oil and Gas Drilling, Servicing and Special Servicing.
- Rig hands had minimal experience in the oil and gas industry.
- Employees were not trained in first aid/CPR, emergency procedures, and not all emergency equipment was available on-site.

Recommendations

- Brief all employees on the facts and circumstances of this fatal mishap.
- Train employees on the Rules and Regulations for Oil and Gas Drilling, Servicing and Special Servicing.
- Develop SOP's or JSA's prior to performing work tasks and ensure all employees on site have been briefed/understand the work going to be performed.
- Ensure all high pressure (blooie) lines are adequately secured to prevent whipping.
- Ensure all employees are trained to recognize the hazards applicable to their job/task.
- Employees on-site should be given the authority to stop a procedure or task that is unsafe.
- Ensure all employees are trained on first aid/CPR, emergency procedures are set in place for location where work is being performed, and all required first-aid items are on-site.
- Employer should conduct routine audits periodically of the work-site to ensure job safety.