



# Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

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ALERT 11 – 10

## IMPROPER USE OF SLEDGEHAMMER RESULTS IN A LOST TIME ACCIDENT

### WHAT HAPPENED:

Employees were attempting to remove a valve seat from a mud pump module that was to be used as a spare. The valve seat puller being used was damaged while trying to remove the valve seat and the welder heated the seat in an attempt to loosen it. A sledgehammer was used to strike another sledgehammer face that was placed on the valve seat in an attempt to loosen and remove the seat when a piece of both the valve seat and sledgehammer face broke off. The broken piece of metal from the sledge hammer face penetrated the leg of the employee who was standing approximately 9 feet (3 meters) away performing fire watch duties.

### WHAT CAUSED IT:

- Employees were not aware of the information in the company policy “Use of Hammers”, which prohibits striking one hammer face with another.
- Employees failed to recognize the hazard and commenced the task. Supervisors failed to stop the job and seek alternative means.

### CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company instructed rig personnel and supervisors to do the following:

1. Review with all crews, the company policy on Use of Hammers.
2. Review with all crews, a fatality report from a previous incident – “Employee Struck by Hammer Fragment”.
3. Conduct a “Hazard Hunt” with emphasis on the condition of hammer heads to ensure they are fit for use, not mushroomed and that hammer handles are in good condition
4. Review and amend all JSA’s associated with the use of sledgehammers to capture the company policy, and “Lessons Learned” document on a hammer incident.

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**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.**

This material is presented for information purposes only. Managers & Supervisors should evaluate this information to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices

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