



# Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

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ALERT 07 – 20

## LABELING CHEMICALS

### WHAT HAPPENED:

A crew on a rig used a solvent to prepare the doghouse floor for painting. They applied the solvent by filling a one liter drinking water bottle and punching a hole in its cap. The bottle was left in the doghouse when the crew went off tour. A floorman on the relieving crew was thirsty and drank out of the water bottle containing the clear solvent, ingesting a small amount of the cleaning fluid. He was transported to the clinic immediately for medical treatment and following first aid and observation he returned to work.

A similar incident occurred on another rig several years ago, when alcohol, used to melt ice, was placed in a water container. The alcohol was being used to remove frost and keep a sheave turning in the subzero temperatures. Like our more recent incident, a chemical was put into a drinking water bottle and not properly labeled to prevent others from misusing the chemical. Another incident involved a rig crewman trying to cool himself off with what he thought was a gallon of water, turned out to be a gallon of gasoline!

### WHAT CAUSED IT:

The most obvious solution to prevent ingestion and misuse of chemicals is to label all containers prominently and accurately. The manufacturer at the point of production and distribution typically applies labels to the original container. These labels identify the chemical, give appropriate warnings, identify the manufacturer, and Material Safety Data Sheets should accompany the products. The problem though, is chemicals transferred from one container to another, usually from a bulk container to a smaller one, and then no labeling being done.

### CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company did the following:

Instructed rig supervisory personnel that:

- Proper labeling is a simple example of communicating hazards to other personnel.
- Labels should identify the contents and include the hazard.
- The company HSE Department recommends that each division order the proper container warning labels to address this problem.

Rig supervisors are to include the labeling system in your Hazard Communication training and review in safety meetings. We already know the outcome when containers aren't properly labeled, and by following labeling best practices, we will prevent this kind of workplace hazard from happening again.

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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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