



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 03 – 03

FLOORMAN STRUCK BY TONGS RESULTS IN LTI

WHAT HAPPENED:

The drilling crew was tripping drill pipe out of the hole. A Floorman who was working the pipe racker position was attempting to help with the tongs by pulling the breakout tongs back as the Driller rotated out each stand. This went on for two hours. The floorman was called away to help with another task and upon returning, continued to work his pipe racking position. When he returned hevi-wate™ pipe was being pulled out of the hole. The floorman again assisted with the break out tongs and when the Driller kicked in the rotary to back out the stand, the tongs snapped toward the injured to the length of the snub line, striking the floorman's right arm, and throwing him into the racked drill pipe. He sustained a severe bruise to his right arm and a head laceration where he struck the racked pipe.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

The process of breaking out stands of drill pipe and rotating out had gone on for two hours before the incident. The hevi-wate™ pipe sits heavier in the stump than drill pipe and will rotate the tongs around quickly when backing up. Standard drill pipe will act the same if the Driller is holding some string weight on the elevators. The injured employee failed to take corrective action as regards to his unsafe work position. Also, for two hours, the crew and Driller had the opportunity to inform the person racking pipe that standing in the radius of the snub line of the breakout tongs is hazardous. The same event is likely when backing into or rotating out a stand of drill collars. This hazard went unrecognized by all personnel on the floor, including the injured employee, or if recognized as a hazard by the co-workers, no one spoke up.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company instructed rig personnel:

- Don't stand in the radius of the snub line of the make-up tongs
- There is no need to touch the tongs by the injured, except to help place the tongs on the pipe. He should be standing out of the radius of the snub lines from the moment the slips are set.
- Although the Rig Manager is the Safety Supervisor and the Driller becomes the Safety Supervisor in the Rig Manager's absence when an unsafe act takes place, it is the responsibility of the all personnel to take action to modify that behavior. No matter who works or relieves on the floor in the pipe racking position.
- It is the Driller's duty to explain the safe way to perform the task at hand and instruct personnel regarding hazardous positions on the rig floor.

IADC Note: Refer to IADC APRG Section 3 for additional information.

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.

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Issued January 2003