ALERT 04 – 09

LOWERING BELL NIPPLE RESULTS IN A FATALITY

WHAT HAPPENED:

While slacking off the Bell Nipple in cellar area, the Bell Nipple pulled down the flow-line on top of the crewman working in cellar. The injuries sustained by the crewman were fatal.

Equipment involved: Two air-hoists, flow-line trough - not connected to bell-nipple with dresser sleeve, but suspended below bell-nipple outlet with chains.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

An employee was working under a load as it was being lowered into position.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company recommended the following:

1) For all flow-lines, make certain that there is a back up system, such as pad-eyes connected by shackles, turnbuckles or certified slings. Chains should be avoided as a back-up system. These back-ups should connect the flow-line to the substructure.

2) Ensure that the flow-line is removed prior to raising or lowering bell-nipple:
   • At dresser-sleeve if it is a pipe-to-pipe connection.
   • Move flow-line trough away from bell-nipple if it is a trough type system.

3) Review the basics of lifting and handling loads.

4) Stress staying out from under loads at all times.

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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