



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 02 – 55

FALL FROM LADDER RESULTS IN A FATALITY

WHAT HAPPENED:

This incident occurred outside the oil and gas drilling industry, but it brings to light an often forgotten or overlooked hazard. An employee was using a small, vertical ladder to climb to a platform in order to lubricate a machine. He fell to the ground from a height of only 1.2m (4ft), striking the side of his head on the ground. He was found unconscious and taken to hospital, where he died.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

It is believed that he was holding a container of oil as he climbed, and therefore it is unlikely that he maintained three-point contact [two hands one foot/two feet one hand] with the ladder. Although it can be difficult to believe, falling unexpectedly from relatively small heights can result in serious injuries. Carrying an oil can prevented him from maintaining three-point contact on ladders that is critical to prevent falls.

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

- Employees should always keep three point contact [two hands one foot/two feet one hand] when climbing ladders.
- When working at heights on all sites, follow company safety standard regarding working at heights.
- All employees are to be made aware of the hazard of not keeping three point contact:

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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