



# Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

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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.

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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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