



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 98-11

Improper Use of Hand Tools

WHAT HAPPENED:

A workover rig crew was tripping in the hole with specialized shouldered production pipe. The pipe procedure required that the pipe be torqued to a specific foot-pound measurement. In conjunction with the power tongs, an altered 48" pipe wrench was being used as a backup. The wrench was snubbed off to the back of the power tongs with a line that incorporated a hydraulic sending device to give the tong operator a torque reading.

The procedure for the first 50 stands was to make up the pipe in high, shift to low and torque to the set limit. On the next stand, before reading the torque limit, the moveable jaw of the pipe wrench broke.

Due to the elevated floor, the rig operator was in a direct line with the backup wrench. The jaw of the wrench struck him on the shoulder and right cheek. Fortunately, he was not seriously injured, although his injuries could have been severe.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

1. Pipe wrenches should not be used as a backup against power assisted tongs.
2. Altered tools should not be used.

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 July 1998