



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 11 – 20

DRILL LINE PULLS THROUGH WIRE ROPE SNAKE WHILE STRINGING BLOCKS

WHAT HAPPENED:

While in the process of stringing the travelling blocks with brand new drill line, the 1-3/8 inch drill line came free from the Wire Rope Wire Mesh Snake Grip and dropped to the rig floor from approximately 20 meters. The line and snake grip had been reeved through all three sheaves on the off driller's side and had passed through the first two sheaves on the driller's side of the travelling block. There was one last sheave on the travelling block to spool.

The snake grip was in good condition and was the correct type for the line. The drill line had been fully inserted into the 1 inch - 1-1/2 inch snake grip right to the rubber boot and then 3 x hose clamps were used to secure the snake grip. The clamps were then covered with tape for about 6 inches on each. The snake grip was then attached to a 3/8 inch wire rope line by back splicing the line's dead end through the snake grip's soft eye. The 3/8 inch wire rope is used to pull the drill line through the crown and travelling block sheaves.

There were four essential people involved in the job on the rig floor but none were near the drop zone. The pre job held emphasized the need for the rig floor to be clear. There was no potential for injury.



Tape and Clamp



Snake

WHAT CAUSED IT:

- **Not following procedure:** A procedure is in place for the "Installation and use of a Lewis Snake". One step in the procedure is to "make sure the cable is clean and free of grease and oil in the areas that will be loaded into the snake grip". The manufacture procedure says: "The grips cannot grip an oily line no matter how hard they are compressing or squeezed. A high grade degreaser and heavy duty disposable towels are recommended for this task."
- **Hazard not identified:** This task has been performed by the crew many times before but the change was the line was new and coated with an oily type preservative. No one who was spoken to during the investigation was aware that cleaning the line was critical.
- **Hose clamp failure:** When the tape covering the hose clamps was removed after the incident two of the hose clamps had broken bands. While guiding the line through the travelling block sheaves, it is likely the larger diameter clamp got caught up passing through the smaller diameter sheaves. The snake grip manufacturer recommends using banding or tape to secure the snake grip. They also mention the option of using a nail through the end of the snake and bending the ends back to secure.

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

- Rig personnel were instructed to follow the snake grip manufacture's recommended "Band It® Clamp" so that the preferred method of securing the snake is used.
- Distributed an internal safety alert to all rigs so that everyone is aware of the hazards of using a snake with oily or grease coated drill line.
- Reinforced to all rigs to follow standard operating procedures so that all of the agreed and necessary steps of the job are known and communicated.

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