

Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate

Safety Alert No. 42

28 August 2009

Crushing fatality – pipe racks load shift

ATTENTION: All workers and companies involved in the oil and gas industry.

What happened?

A 24-year-old man was struck and crushed by pipe racks which came off a truck that was being unloaded at a drill site. The rig worker did not survive his injuries.

Petroleum and Gas Inspectors are currently investigating the incident and will prepare a report for the coroner.

While the exact causes of the incident are still to be determined, this safety alert is a reminder to all operators, staff, their employees and contractors to take particular care when loading and unloading large heavy equipment from vehicles.



Safety issues identified

- Load restraint bollards only in place on one side of the truck.
- It appears pipe rack groups were separately tied down (i.e. upper and lower layers separately restrained) but the upper layer was not removed before restraints were removed from lower layer of pipe racks.
- People standing in high risk area adjacent to vehicle.
- Lack of risk assessment and use of standard operating procedures when unloading.

Recommendations

- Restraint bollards to be used wherever practical for transport of pipe racks and other long loads.
- Appropriate exclusion zones to be put in place when loading and unloading.
- Loading and unloading procedures to include requirements for correct sequence of events and/or use of primary and secondary restraints.
- Organisations to immediately review their:
 - detailed risk assessments
 - standard operating procedures (SOPs)
 - job safety analyses (JSAs)
 - training and supervision requirements to ensure that this type of task and associated risks are adequately covered.
- Refer to Australian Load Restraint guide for transport.



For further information, please contact:

Chief Inspector, Petroleum and Gas
Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate
Queensland Mines and Energy
Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Telephone: 07 3237 1389 Fax: 07 3224 7768
Email: gassafe@dme.qld.gov.au
Website: www.deedi.qld.gov.au