

Safety Alert

MMS

U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

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2006 Fatalities

In the Gulf of Mexico OCS during calendar year 2006 to date, five fatalities have resulted from incidents under Minerals Management Service (MMS) jurisdiction. Brief descriptions of the incidents follow:

- 1) As a drive sub-assembly was being lifted from the top of a drive pipe, the plate attached to the lifting eye parted from the drive sub-assembly; the drive sub-assembly then fell to the rig floor, fatally striking a floorhand.
- 2) As force continued to be exerted to pull stuck tubing, the tubing parted, blowing the tubing and the slips out of the hole; the ejected slips fatally struck an employee.
- 3) A non-load-bearing guide post fatally struck an employee after its floor weld failed as it was being used as a base, with block and tackle, for moving equipment.
- 4) A contract employee fell with fatal results through a hole in a grating to a deck approximately 20 feet below, prior to falling into the water.
- 5) During pipe-laying operations, an employee was fatally crushed between two joints of pipe when a pipe conveyor system became unexpectedly energized.

In addition, two other fatalities occurred during calendar year 2006 under United States Coast Guard jurisdiction. One involved a diving operation and the other the transportation of an employee onto a platform by using a swing rope.

Because each of the referenced incidents is being investigated by the MMS, any conclusions and resultant recommendations currently being formulated are of a preliminary nature. However, we are issuing this Safety Alert prior to the conclusion of the investigations and the production of an official report because of MMS's concern regarding the number of fatalities that have occurred with over four months remaining in the calendar year.

MMS is therefore recommending that operators continue to evaluate their operations from a safety perspective and take all necessary actions to ensure a safe working environment on their leases. These actions should include but not be limited to the requirement of job safety analyses, pre-task safety meetings, hazard analyses with resultant risk assessment and management, and adherence to established task procedural guidelines.

All of the aforementioned MMS investigation reports, when completed, will be available for viewing at the following MMS website: www.gomr.mms.gov/homepg/offshore/safety/safety.html

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