



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

Safety Alert No. 198
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Drilling Accident Results in Fatality

Recently, while two roustabouts were positioning a stand of pipe into a pipe rack finger in the derrick, the pipe rack finger fell to the rig floor, killing one roustabout and injuring the other. The nine-stand derrick finger weighed approximately 65 lbs. and fell approximately 90 feet. Preliminary indications are that the finger fell as the result of the failure of a weld near the base of the finger.

Although the accident is currently under investigation by MMS, with an official report to be issued at a later date, the above facts and the potential for similar occurrences have prompted this alert.

MMS recommends that all pipe rack fingers currently in use and those scheduled for use be inspected for the purpose of verifying their structural integrity. At the conclusion of MMS's investigation of the accident, the issuance of an additional Safety Alert with further recommendations is possible.

—GOMR—MMS—

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