

SAFETY ALERT - #61-2006
PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION / TRANSPORTATION FATALITY
RELEASE DATE: DECEMBER 18, 2006

Function: Pipeline Construction-Transportation	Incident Date: December 1, 2006
Location: Onshore	Location Detail: Public Road
Incident Type: Fatality	Country and Region: Canada, NW Alberta

Description of Incident:

A truck driver had just arrived at location to deliver a pipe layer tractor. He unchained the pipe layer and had started moving the unit towards the trailer's beavertail. Eyewitnesses observed the pipe layer teetering, the driver suddenly standing up at the controls, followed by the machine shifting sideways appearing to lose control, then tumbling and overturning onto ground on the ditch side of the road, fatally injuring the driver who had unsuccessfully tried to jump clear from the tumbling machine.



Immediate or Initial Actions:

- Initial first aid to the worker was rendered but to no avail.
- Emergency services were called and the scene was preserved until authorities and responders arrived.

Background:

The equipment move was considered routine and not time sensitive. The driver had 17 years of combined heavy equipment operating and trucking experience. By his employer's account, he was very competent and safety conscious reflected by an accident free record of over 1 million miles and having moved over 500 pieces of equipment over the past two years. According to the employer and co-workers, the worker knew and respected the risks associated with loading and off loading pipe layers. He had moved this specific piece of equipment at least six times prior to the incident and was using the right equipment for the job (scissor neck trailer and winch tractor). Discussions with other pipeline contractors revealed that loading and unloading pipe layers has led to many incidents over the years ranging from near miss to fatal accidents. They consider this a common concern throughout the pipeline construction industry.



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Preliminary Assessment of Direct and Indirect Causes:

Direct Cause:

- Improper Loading or Off-loading Practice(s)

Indirect Cause:

- Inadequate Risk/Hazard Assessment of task

Other Contributing Factors:

- The placement of pipe layer and trailer on slight incline.
- The physical and operational characteristics of the pipe layer.

Summary:

This incident may have been prevented had the worker:

1. Scissored down the lowboy and walked the pipe layer off the front of the trailer.
2. Used a winch tether combined with trailer to ground blocking for unloading the pipe layer using the trailer's beavertail.
3. Used a fixed ramp in conjunction with the trailer's beavertail (i.e., temporary earthen ramp).

Future Preventative Actions

1. Circulate a safety memorandum to all owners' internal stakeholders requesting that all pipeline contractors currently working for the owner perform Job Safety Analysis (JSAs) and develop written procedures for the loading and offloading of pipe layers and submit copies to owner's construction supervisors.
2. Forward a safety alert to Enform with the recommendation that a Guide to Safe Work (GTSW) be mandated for loading and unloading of powered mobile equipment, specifically pipe layers.
3. Forward a safety flash to Canadian Energy Pipeline Association (CEPA), Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), Petroleum Services Association of Canada (PSAC), Alberta Construction Safety Association (ACSA) and Pipeline Contractors Association of Canada (PLCAC) for review by their membership and to poll support for an industry sanctioned GTSW.

For more information please contact:

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DISCLAIMER:

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