



Selected drilling occurrence reports submitted in 2011

The drill support truck rolled backwards from its parking spot down the slope into the camp. This happened when the drill manager attempted to move the truck further up the slope from its parking spot near the container. The truck rolled over a couple of tents including the rec tent. There were a few people around at the time, and fortunately no-one was injured.

Replaced old sample hose on RC rig with new one at start of hole and started drilling and got a blockage. Tried unblocking it with 350psi blowback but wouldn't unblock. Bled all the system air off and took cyclone end of sample hose off. Proceeded to wash out using water hose. All of a sudden a rush of built-up air caused by a double blockage blew out spraying rock chips into the driller's hand holding the water hose and the sample hose also kicked back a little.

While undertaking hydro drilling operations, an auxiliary air compressor developed an oil leak. As soon as the oil leak was spotted the unit was shut down. Upon inspection a flame on the turbo lagging was spotted and immediately extinguished with a dry chemical powder-type extinguisher. The fire suppression did not activate due to the insignificance of the flame.

While adding a new drill rod to the rod string, the rig fire suppression system was automatically activated. Initial inspection indicated that it may have been triggered by an electrical fault as there were no visible signs of fire or smoke. On closer inspection the lagging on the inside of the receiver tank showed evidence of fire/smoke damage - a full investigation has commenced to identify the root cause.

A driller's offsider was required to step out of the path of a falling drill bit. A 1.2 ton 16" rock roller (for hole reaming) bit about 4.5 metres long, which was resting on a hole cover plate after being disconnected from the leader drill rod, fell out of the break out wrench (which was engaged at the time of the incident) while still within the slips table assembly / guide. The bit was disconnected from the leader rod so the driller's offsider could affix the winching bung (a threaded steel bund with a lifting shackle) and consequently attach the winch rope. As the driller's offsider approached the disconnected bit, he noticed that it was swaying backwards and forwards in the break out wrench. He stopped and stepped backwards. At that moment the bit slipped backwards out of the break out wrench completely as its weight was too great for the slip table assembly guide to support. The welds on the slip table assembly failed causing the roller bit and the table assembly to fall over. Drilling operations were immediately suspended pending the outcome of the occurrence investigation. No personnel were injured. Significant damage to the table assembly occurred..... Detailed investigation to follow.

A driller was driving back to camp along the main access track (gravel road) at ~ 10:30 pm when he lost control and rolled the vehicle. The vehicle came to a stop back on its tyres and the driller was able to drive it back to camp, where he alerted the senior driller of the accident.

03/2011

The driller's offsider was walking around the RC rig. As he stepped over the RC outside return pipe, a pipe about 1.2 m long, the return pipe rotated around 300 mm and struck him on the back of the leg.