

Workplace Health and Safety Bulletin



Anchoring Emergency Escape Lines

Inspections of drilling and service rigs by Alberta Employment and Immigration, Occupational Health and Safety Officers have revealed that emergency escape line anchoring is often inadequate. Emergency escape lines provide workers with a means of making a quick, controlled descent from a rig's elevated platform in the event of a blowout, wellhead fire, or other emergency. Improperly installed anchors can fail when need most, resulting in serious worker injury or death.

A survey of emergency escape line products available in Alberta showed that manufacturers require their ground anchors to be subject to a static pull test when installed. The manufacturers surveyed each require a static pull test of 3,000 lbs. Because products available from other manufacturers may not have been included in the survey, always refer to the specifications provided by the manufacturer of the product being used to ensure that it is properly installed and tested.


Equally important is the escape line's anchor point at the rig. Section 12 of the Occupational Health and Safety Code requires employers to erect, install, test, use, and maintain equipment according to the specifications provided by the manufacturer. Where the manufacturer's specifications may not exist, specifications certified by a professional engineer are necessary and acceptable.


Lease owners and drilling and service rig companies are responsible for ensuring that emergency escape lines are properly installed, tested, and maintained. Because of their importance as an emergency device, future field inspections of drilling and service rigs by Occupational Health and Safety Officers will focus on the anchoring of emergency escape lines.


Government of Alberta ■
Employment and Immigration

Contact us:

Province-Wide Contact Centre

 Edmonton & surrounding area:
780-415-8690

 Throughout Alberta:
1-866-415-8690

 Deaf or hearing impaired

- In Edmonton: **780-427-9999**

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- **1-800-232-7215**
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Web Site

 www.worksafely.org

Getting copies of OHS Act, Regulation & Code:

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Workplace Health and Safety

 <http://employment.alberta.ca/whs-ohs>

Call any Government of Alberta office toll-free
Dial 310-0000, then the area code and telephone number you want to reach

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