



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

Safety Alert

Safety Alert No. 279
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Nylon Sling Failure

Recently a 2-inch nylon web sling parted while being used to support an e-line lubricator, resulting in the lubricator and tool string striking the platform's grated deck prior to entering the Gulf of Mexico. All material was recovered with no reports of injuries or pollution.

An MMS investigation into this incident revealed that: (1) personnel utilized improper rigging practice for lifting the lubricator. The lubricator was equipped with a lifting bracket for use with a two part sling, but the decision was made to utilize a nylon sling cinched in a choker type manner just below the lifting bracket, and (2) personnel failed to provide suitable protection between the nylon sling and the lifting bracket on the lubricator. The nylon sling was cinched in a manner that allowed the sharp edge of the lubricator's lifting bracket to chafe the nylon material at a point that was not visible to personnel involved in the task.

MMS, therefore, recommends that:

- When handling specialty equipment such as wireline/e-line lubricators, operators should use the lifting equipment (lifting bracket) that is provided in the manner in which it was designed and intended for use. When this is not possible, a hazards analysis should be conducted before deviating from the intended procedure to identify all potential failures of the alternative method and possible mitigations to those failures.
- Operators review the general guidelines on the proper use of slings located in API RP 2D – Operations and Maintenance of Offshore Cranes, Fifth Edition, June 2003, with specific attention to:
 - Section 5.2.1 – Sling Use and Inspection;
 - Appendix B, Section C.3.2.2c – Sling Use Guidelines; and,
 - Appendix G, Section C.5.2.1 – Use of Slings.
- Operators review Safety Alert #257 issued on January 10, 2008, and titled Three Crane Accidents Caused by Improper Rigging for additional information.

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