Injury: Fatality  
Date: September 1, 2002

Description:

On September 1, 2002, a fatality occurred as a result of a wellsite worker coming into contact with a black bear. The incident occurred in the early evening near Fort Nelson, British Columbia. The investigation revealed that the worker left his well site trailer and encountered a black bear. The bear attacked the worker and dragged him behind the well site trailers. Several attempts were made to scare off the bear and rescue the worker before the animal left the area. The worker was removed to a safe area where First Aid commenced, transferred to Ft. Nelson hospital and pronounced dead on arrival as a result of the injuries sustained in the attack.

Immediate Corrective Actions Taken:

- Addition of light banks to the location. These were pointed to the bush area to provide perimeter lighting.
- Completion of an HSE Alert aimed at educating and warning all employees that bears are present and are a potential danger.
- Animal Scare Kits were added to the energy company’s locations and service company’s vehicles. These include noise makers, pepper spray and other related animal scare products.
- Bear was hunted and killed on September 4, 2002 by British Columbia - Fish and Wildlife personnel.
- Bear scare dogs were contracted and sent to the rig sites to assess and scare off any additional animals.

Recommendations Made as a Result of the Investigation:

- Train employees on dealing with bears and other wild animals while on location. This would include:
  - Education on proper disposal of food to reduce the attraction by bears.
  - Strict disciplinary policy aimed at deterring employees from feeding and habituating animals in the wild.
  - Methods of responding to an encounter or an aggressive animal while on location. This could include calling Fish and Wildlife officials to modify the bear’s behavior, trap and remove the problem animal or proper use of bear scare kits.
- Improve current rig layout checklists to include improved security of the wellsite. This may include:
  - Installing a barrier to isolate the working area from the natural environment. As part of this, any refuse or sump areas need to be isolated from the environment to prevent animals from entering the work area. This could include any shack or onsite accommodations which would be moved as close together as possible to prevent easy access by animals to the worksite.
  - Using a perimeter alarm system such as a laser system/trip wire, etc, to warn of animals coming into location.
  - Improving the lighting near the shacks to ensure that the perimeter of the location is well lit to warn employees of wild animals should they be near the lease.
  - Include perimeter buildings and equipment into the regular inspection checklists.
- Evaluation and pre-planning of frontier areas and well locations for:
  - Adequate second level response (Emergency Medical Technicians) located within immediate area of work location.

This material is presented for information purposes only. Managers and Supervisors should evaluate this information to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices.
Medical Evacuation equipment on work locations or central point for transportation to hospital.

Adequate medical equipment and training to resuscitate a casualty.

Assessment of environmental conditions and affects.