



Safety Alert No. 457

March 3, 2023

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## Broken Breaker Bar Injury with Medical Evaluation Guidance



*Broken breaker bar following the incident*

A worker was injured when using the wrong sized breaker bar to remove a star nut on a stud bolt from a flange. The worker fell forward into a steel beam when the half-inch breaker bar broke as the worker applied downward force to remove a three-inch star nut. Injuries included fractured teeth and a lower lip laceration. The company reported the following lessons learned from the incident and reminded workers to:

- Thoroughly inspect all tools before and during use for damage.
- Consider other options regarding tool selection to complete a task, such as choosing a hand tool instead of a portable powered tool.
- Be aware of their body positioning when performing a job task to avoid pinch point areas or striking other objects in the workplace. This is particularly important when completing a job requiring powered tools, rigging activities, bleeding off pressurized equipment, etc.
- Use Stop Work Authority to quickly stop work when unsafe acts or conditions are recognized in the workplace.

BSEE reviews reported injuries of this nature to identify root causes and prevent future injuries. BSEE ensures these lessons learned from incidents are used to strengthen Safety and Environmental Management Systems (SEMS) programs and that workers are fully involved in developing and implementing their SEMS plan.

**Therefore, BSEE recommends operators and contractors consider the following:**

- Review this incident and consider the lessons learned listed by the company.
- Involve all employees and contractors in reviewing your company's policies and programs to identify their options for medical treatment if injured on the job and mitigate potential conflicts where they might exist.
- Review all privacy laws and regulations to ensure the medical privacy of all workers and fully understand when and where they are applicable.
- Review 43 USC CHAPTER 29, SUBCHAPTER III: OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF LANDS ACT (OCSLA) and the regulatory requirements of 30 CFR part 250 for lessees, operators, and entities performing regulated activities on their behalf to fully understand the lawful obligations to ensure information and records are provided to BSEE in a timely manner.

– BSEE –

A **Safety Alert** is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding a potential safety issue. It also contains recommendations that could assist avoiding potential incidents on the Outer Continental Shelf.

**Category:** Lifting