



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

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Safety Alert

Testing of Subsurface Safety Valves

A potential problem concerning tubing retrievable surface-controlled subsurface safety valves installed in high flow rate gas wells was recently brought to our attention.

Two sizes of a particular model valve were found to occasionally fail during testing at a laboratory facility. The problem was caused by the additive effect of manufacturing tolerance that made the internal parts of the valve grab. The manufacturer has tightened the specifications to eliminate the problem. The few wells in the Gulf of Mexico OCS presently using these valves are being reviewed on a case by case basis with some wells having wireline retrievable surface-controlled subsurface safety valves installed.

This points out the advisability of additional laboratory testing of all types of subsurface safety valves to provide assurance that the valve will operate satisfactorily in accordance with the design.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

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Operations Support

Gulf of Mexico Area