



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

Notice No. 112

May 16, 1983

### Fire

A fire occurred on an offshore production platform when a field gauger was attempting to start up a line heater before putting a high-pressure gas well on production. The departing flow-line block valve had been closed previously for installation of a pipeline pig in the pig launcher. The block valve was inadvertently not reopened when the gauger locked open the SSVs and opened the adjustable choke to pressurize the flow line and fuel gas supply line to the line heater. With the block valve closed, the fuel gas supply system was overpressured by the shut-in well pressure, and the fuel gas supply pot ruptured. The escaping gas ignited and blew onto the field workboat which was next to the platform. The captain of the workboat was struck by the flame and sustained second- and third-degree burns up to 20 percent of his body. The gauger was standing on the upper deck of the platform near the line heater and jumped overboard with only minor burns. The platform was boarded later and the well shut-in. Damage to the well deck structure and the main control panel was estimated at \$15,000.

To prevent recurrence of this type of accident, the operator has taken the following steps:

1. The fuel gas supply pot for the line heater has been relocated to a position downstream of the flow line FSV so that fuel gas can be drawn from that segment of the flow line where low pressure gas is contained, thus enabling field personnel to start up and run the line heater to desired temperature before having to open the well.
2. A high-pressure self-relieving regulator has been installed near the wellhead to eliminate the potential for overpressurizing the gas supply piping. This piping will also be upgraded to withstand the regulated pressure.
3. Field personnel have been instructed that SSVs will only be locked open when performing through-tubing or wireline work.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

Regional Supervisor

Offshore Operations Support