





# Potential Fatal Event: Drill Rig Cable Failed



Preliminary Incident Details	
Operation	Whitlock Valley Test Well-Land and Water
Date / Time	December 28, 2023 / 6:10 a.m.
Type	Near Miss
Summary	A contractor had successfully completed the drilling and construction of one of three test production wells southeast of Safford and was installing a gravel filter pack using a 3-inch tremie pipe. Throughout the process, there was clogging in the pipe. The contractor lifted the pipe with a crane to clear debris when the main cable snapped, causing a 100-pound steel ball to fall approximately 12 feet to the drilling platform below, where a driller and helper had been working moments earlier.
Fatal Risk	Falling Objects
Risk Category	Medium
Risk Rating	Significant (3), Possible (2)
Findings / Missing Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flagging and Barricading</li><li>• Equipment Inspections</li><li>• Manufacturer Specifications for Replacement</li></ul>
Applicable Policies / Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flagging and Barricading</li><li>• Drill Rig Pre-use Inspections</li></ul>
Employee Condition	N/A
Contact	Michael Lacey, Manager-Hydrogeology. Bill Schneider, Health & Safety Manager

Photos / Links	
	<p><i>The drill rig cables used during the pipe installation process.</i></p>
	<p><i>Circled in red is the 100-pound steel ball that fell 13 feet to the drilling platform where two contractor employees had been working.</i></p>