

A Guide On: Oil Rig Accidents



Oil Rig Accidents

There are many occupations which are considered to be high risk but one that has an exceptionally high risk is that of working on an oil rig. As well as facing the normal hazards that those in other occupations may face such as slips, trips and manual handling, they have to deal with a lot of unique risks that come with working in such a unique environment.

Fortunately, there are strict rules and regulations that must be adhered to which mean that accidents on oil rigs are quite rare. However, they still do happen and when they do, they can lead to serious injuries and potentially prove fatal. The nature of the environment in which they occur can also mean that accidents affect far more people.

Main Risks on Oil Rigs

Oil rigs are unique constructions and as such the risks that are faced by those working on them can be unique too. Along with the usual risks such as manual handling, slips and trips, and working from a height the following risks exist on an oil rig:

- Difficult travel to the rig in difficult conditions
- Explosion
- Structural damage to rig caused by extreme natural conditions
- Fire
- Release of gas
- Hazardous substances
- Heavy and awkward plant and equipment

Injuries which occur from these risks are typically of the more serious nature ranging from serious burns and lacerations to amputations and death.

Oil Rig Risk and Accident Statistics

In 2014 - 2015, the health and safety executive stated that there was:

- 1 fatality
- Over 125 7 days and over injuries
- 369 dangerous occurrences
- 82 hydrocarbon releases

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Employees Responsibilities

In law, all employees have a general duty of care to themselves and others. This includes complying with any procedures and practices put in place by their employers and they must use the equipment provided by the employer for their health and safety also.

Employer's Responsibilities

Employers have a legal duty of care to their employees to ensure that the working environment they are on is safe and as free from risk as possible. Any risks that remain must be communicated and managed accordingly.

There are extensive health and safety regulations governing oil rigs but these can typically be put into 4 categories.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should be performed for each and every one of the operations on an oil rig. Risks should be identified and controls put in place to mitigate the risk. This includes putting in place measures to prevent any release of flammable or explosive substances. These risks should be communicated to employees so they are aware and have the opportunity to be consulted on them.

Once done, the rig should be operated in line with the safety plan put in place.

Safety and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where risks cannot be mitigated, PPE and safety equipment should be issued. This equipment is designed to protect the workers from the potential harm from the remaining risks. This equipment should be appropriate and adequate for use.

Examples include hard hats, hoists and gloves. Staff should be briefed on how to use this equipment and the equipment should be regularly maintained.

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Train Workers

In such a difficult environment, it is vital that workers are adequately trained to perform their roles. Training should be provided to all staff to enable them to operate machines and equipment safely. Training can take place in many forms including on the job and classroom based.

Maintaining the structure

The structure of an oil rig is in the middle of a sea and the environment around it is treacherous. High winds, heavy seas and sinking into the seabed can cause structural damage. This can compromise the safety of employees and as such, it should be inspected and maintained regularly to ensure safety.

Can You Make a Claim?

If you have suffered personal injury as a result of an oil rig accident which wasn't your fault, then you may be eligible to claim. Employers have to comply with regulations to ensure that workers safety is protected. If they haven't complied with these regulations, they would be considered at fault if an accident and personal injury occurred.

The best way to be sure if you can make a claim is to get in touch with one of our lawyers and once they have heard the circumstances, they will be able to advise if they think a successful claim is possible.

How Can Injury Lawyers UK Help?

Here, at Injury Lawyers UK, we have a team of highly experienced, professional personal injury lawyers. With over 20 years of experience in successfully winning personal injury claims, you can be sure that with us you are in the best hands.

We deal with all cases sensitively, especially those involving current employers. We have found that the majority of employers are happy to cooperate with us as in most cases, their insurance policies are the ones that that will be paying rather than them. It also allows them to make changes going forward to prevent accidents from happening again.

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We take control of the claim, taking the stress out of it and allowing you to do what's most important; focus on your recovery. We speak in plain English (no legal jargon here) and give you regular updates throughout the process so you'll always know where you're at with your case.

Get In Touch With Injury Lawyers UK

Get in touch with Injury Lawyers UK today to discuss whether you could be eligible to make a claim for compensation for injuries sustained in an accident on an oil rig. Call us on **0800 285 1411**, send an email to claims@injury-lawyersuk.com or submit an online enquiry form on our web site: injury-lawyersuk.com

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