Drum Starts Unexpectedly

What Happened?

A crew was installing flagging material in the sand line with the rig engine running. Someone bumped the sand drum clutch lever. The drum was engaged and one employee fell into the compartment and was fatally injured.

How Did It Happen?

While installing flagging material in the sand line, two employees were in position on top of the sand drum cover. Each employee was using a 24-inch pipe wrench to rotate open the sand line in order to insert a screwdriver and then the flagging material. Each employee had one foot resting on the drum. After they inserted the flagging material, they removed the pipe wrenches from the sand line but the screwdriver was stuck in the middle of the sand line. The crew chief, who was standing at the sand drum controls, reached to assist one of the crew members to pull out the screwdriver. As he leaned forward he accidentally bumped the sand drum clutch lever with his left hip. The sand drum brake handle was not secured. The drum engaged and caused one of the employees to fall into the drum compartment. He received leg and abdominal injuries, which ultimately resulted in a fatality.

What Could Prevent This In The Future?

- Kill the rig engine and chain down the sand drum brake handle before performing any work in or near the sand drum.
- Retrain employees in the specific job hazards that they face regarding hazardous energy isolation and lockout/tagout procedures.
- Develop a JSA for installing flagging material.

Source: Canadian Petroleum Safety Council