



## U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety & Health Administration

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### OSHA News Release

## 2005 - 02/11/2005 - OSHA Cites Patterson-UTI Drilling After Fatal Accident

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# OSHA Regional News Release

U.S. Department of Labor  
Office of Public Affairs

Region 6

Region 6 News Release OSHA-05-233-DAL  
Friday, Feb. 11, 2005  
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### OSHA Cites Patterson-UTI Drilling After Fatal Accident

**OKLAHOMA CITY** -- The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued citations against Patterson-UTI Drilling Co. and proposed penalties totaling \$187,000 for safety violations that led to a worker's death.

"This tragic loss of life should in itself spur the employer to take greater precautions to protect workers," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao. "To increase worker protection, this Administration will continue to use strong enforcement to reduce workplace injuries and illnesses. The significant penalty of \$187,000 in this case demonstrates our commitment to protecting the health and safety of America's workers."

Patterson-UTI Drilling employs about 5,800 workers and owns 361 land-based drilling rigs. Following an inspection that began Aug. 12, OSHA alleged that the Snyder, Texas-based oil and gas land drilling company committed three willful, one serious and two repeat violations. The agency was responding to a fatality that occurred the day before at the company's oil rig site in Hinton, Okla.

The alleged willful violations include failing to secure the man basket to the forklift; to provide the proper training to operate a forklift, and to retrain employees when workplace conditions changed. A willful citation is issued by OSHA when an employer either knew that a condition constituted a violation or was aware that a hazardous condition existed and made no reasonable effort to correct it.

The alleged serious citations were issued for failure to remove a defective forklift from service which resulted in the death of one worker and serious injury to another. OSHA defines a serious violation as one in which there is a substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result from a hazard about which the employer knew or should have known.

Alleged repeat violations included failing to provide training for the safe use of powered industrial equipment and failing to provide certification for operating a forklift. A repeat violation is defined by OSHA as a violation that has been cited previously for a substantially similar condition.

In the past three years, 11 fatalities have occurred at Patterson-UTI Drilling's various Texas, Oklahoma and Wyoming rig sites. OSHA has cited the company with 17 safety violations and proposed penalties totaling \$725,900.

The company has 15 working days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an informal conference with the Oklahoma City area office, or contest them before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Employers and employees with questions regarding workplace safety and health standards can call OSHA's Oklahoma City area office at (405) 278-9560. Call OSHA's hotline at 1-800-321-6742 to report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers. Employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthful workplace for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure the safety and health of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health. For more information, visit [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

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