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Helicopter Longline Operations – Static Charged Longline

A Veritas DGC Land Subcontractor (Drill Helper) was knocked down by the static discharge from a helicopter longline. The Drill Helper was working on a Heli-portable advance operation in Southern Alberta and made contact with the helicopter longline prior to it contacting the ground to release the static charge buildup. The Pilot of the aircraft witnessed the Drill Helper falling to the ground after the release of energy and immediately called for the Medic. The Medic was dispatched to the incident location and upon arrival to site witnessed the Drill Helper to be in good condition. Although there was no serious injury as a result of the incident, the potential was certainly there!

To reduce reoccurrence potential:

- Ensure all employees/subcontractors are orientated on Helicopter Longline Procedures (Static Charge)
- Always allow the longline to make ground contact PRIOR to contacting the longline
- Always wear the required P.P.E. when working under helicopter operations (Hardhat, Eye Protection and gloves)

The amount of static charge buildup may vary at any time during the day based on a number of environmental conditions. To remove the chance of static discharge, allow the longline, load and/or hook to make contact with the ground first!