

Condensate Tank Lifting Lug Failure

What happened?

Whilst decommissioning a geothermal condensate tank a contractor was potentially exposed to high concentrations of H₂S. To fully drain the remaining condensate from the tank, a hiab was used to attach a strop to one of four lifting lugs on the top of the tank, to elevate one side and drain the remainder of the tank. The lug failed, tearing a hole in the top of the tank. The contractor was potentially exposed to gas escaping from the tank, resulting in nausea and subsequent overnight hospitalisation for observation.

Mercury Kawerau Power Station

What did we learn?

- ✘ Polyethylene tank had UV degradation making the lifting lugs 'brittle'
- ✘ Accumulation of high concentrations of H₂S gas are possible in the vapour space of a geothermal condensate tank due to cyclical nature of operation

