



Weekly Safety Briefings

Week 3 – January 20-24, 2020

Crane & Hoist Safety

Nothing is more frightening to a crane operator than a crane becoming unbalanced or collapsing due to excessive weight load. In an average year, injuries related to cranes and hoists account for approximately 1,000 lost-time work hours. Employees working with this type of equipment are exposed to great hazards which require taking extra safety precautions.

This week, we will discuss the safety rules for operating cranes, moving loads, and parking loaded cranes. We will also discuss how to properly inspect overhead cranes, hoists, and wire ropes used on hoists.

Monday – Safety Tips Before Operating Cranes

Serious injuries or fatalities can occur if overhead cranes are not inspected before each use. Here are some safety tips for operators to follow before operating and loading a crane.

- Ensure you are properly trained and authorized to operate a crane. Read the operation manual provided by the manufacturer before beginning any task.
- Completely understand the tasks you will perform.
- Study the signals used by an authorized signal person during operation. Obey all signals.
- Do not operate if any damage exists. Report damage or malfunction to your supervisor.
- Attach loads to the hoist hook and ensure that they do not exceed the load capacity of the crane or hoist.
- Verify that the load is balanced properly when it is lifted.
- Verify that the hoist wire is not damaged, twisted, or kinked.
- Notify all personnel in the work area of an overhead load and ensure that the area is clear.

Tuesday – Safety Tips for Moving the Load

Yesterday, we reviewed safety tips to keep in mind when operating a crane. Today, we will discuss safety tips for moving a loaded crane.

- When operating a loaded crane, stay focused and do not engage in any activity that can distract you.
- Do not lower, lift, or transport any load before ensuring all personnel are clear from the area.
- Ensure that the load can clear all obstacles before moving.
- Never move loads over people's heads.
- Lift the load only a few inches before moving to ensure the hoist braking system is working.
- Never swing the load or hoist hook while moving.
- Use the warning device during travel to notify nearby people of the moving load.

If a crane does not have a warning device, verbally warn all people in the area before beginning operation.

Wednesday – Safety Tips for Parking the Load

Overhead cranes are an essential piece of equipment in many manufacturing, industrial, and maintenance work environments. Using cranes drastically eliminates the risks associated with heavy lifting so it is very important to follow all safety rules when it comes to operation. However, parking loaded cranes comes with risks that require taking unique precautions to ensure the safety of all people.



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- Never lower a load until all personnel are cleared away from the area. Verify that the load can clear any and all obstacles before lowering.
- Take extra precautions when removing a sling from under a lowered and blocked load.
- Never leave a suspended load unattended.
- Position the hoist load, and block and hook the hoist above head level storage when the hoist is not being used.

Thursday – Inspection and Maintenance of Cranes and Hoists

Why is inspection and maintenance so important? Inspection is essential as improper maintenance can possibly lead to serious injury, death, or property damage. Here are a few standards and reference manuals for proper inspection:

- OSHA - 29 CFR Part 1910.179
- ASME – B30.0-2005
- Crane Manufacturers Association of America – CMAA Specification 78
- State and local codes
- Manufactures' Operations Manual

Trained personnel must inspect wire rope used on hoists on a regular basis. Inspections should follow the manufacturer's recommended schedule of inspection. Additionally, operators should always perform a visual inspection before use. Always replace wire rope if one of the following conditions exists:

- Broken wires or excessive wear
- Tight or open kinks
- Snagged wires
- Rusty ropes
- Rope that has jumped out of sheave and pulled around hub

Friday – Review and Discussion

Think about what we learned about crane and hoist safety this week:

- Are there new crane and hoist safety tips that you learned this week?
- What changes does your team need to make in how cranes and hoists are used in your work areas to keep people safe?
- If your team does not use cranes or hoists often, can you think of any excessive lifts that may need a crane or hoist to keep people safe from lifting injuries or improper/overloaded forklift use?

If you have not already, take time today to inspect and maintain your cranes and hoists, even if it is not regularly scheduled. Find issues that you may have overlooked in the past.