Overhead crane safety toolbox talk

29 CFR 1910.179

Date _____ Trainer _____ Location _____

Opening question

When you last used the overhead crane, did you check the hook, the limit switch and the path below the load?

Why it matters

An overhead crane moves heavy loads right over our heads. A dropped load, a swinging load, a failed brake or a bad rope can hurt or kill someone below. Much of your protection comes from checks and habits that take a few minutes: knowing the rated load, rigging well, testing before you lift and keeping people out from under the load.

Key points

1. **Only designated operators run the crane**
   Only designated personnel may operate an overhead or gantry crane (29 CFR 1910.179(b)(8)). Learn the controls, the warning signals and the rated load for the exact crane you use. If you are not designated, you do not run it. Ask your supervisor if you are not sure.
   29 CFR 1910.179(b)(8)

2. **Inspect and test before you lift**
   Look at the hook for deformation and cracks, at the chain and rope for wear, kinks and broken wires, and at the operating mechanisms and air or hydraulic lines for leaks. Hooks need a visual inspection daily and a monthly inspection with a certification record (29 CFR 1910.179(j)(2)(iii)). At the beginning of each operator's shift, the upper limit switch of each hoist must be tried out under no load (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(4)(i)). If anything is wrong, stop and tell your supervisor.
   29 CFR 1910.179(b)(4)(i)

3. **Know the rated load and never exceed it**
   The rated load is marked on the crane and must be clearly legible from the floor (29 CFR 1910.179(b)(5)). The crane must not be loaded past its rated load except for test purposes (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(1)). Know the weight of the load before you pick it up, and count the weight of the hook, the sling and any attachments.
   29 CFR 1910.179(n)(1)

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4 Rig it right before it leaves the floor

Attach the load to the hook with slings or other approved devices (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(2)(ii)). The hoist rope or chain must be free of kinks or twists and must not be wrapped around the load (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(2)(i)). The load must be well secured and properly balanced before it is lifted more than a few inches (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(3)(i)). Lift a few inches, check it and test the brakes before you go further.

29 CFR 1910.179(n)(3)(i)

5 Keep people out from under the load

The employer must require the operator to avoid carrying loads over people (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(3)(vi)). No one may ride on the load or hook while hoisting, lowering or traveling (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(3)(v)). Use the warning signal when the crane travels, plan the path ahead and clear it before the lift.

29 CFR 1910.179(b)(vi)

6 Move smoothly and plan for swing

Avoid sudden starts and stops, which make the load swing. Bring the hook directly over the load before you lift, and keep the load clear of obstructions. Never use the upper limit switch as an operating control (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(4)(ii)). If two cranes lift one load, one qualified, responsible person must be in charge (29 CFR 1910.179(n)(3)(ix)).

Scenario

Picture this: An operator is moving a steel part across the shop. The load is a little off center, the sling is twisted around the hook and a coworker is walking along the aisle the load will pass over. The operator starts and stops quickly, and the load swings. What should he have done differently?

Crew discussion

1. Who on this site is designated to operate the crane?
2. What do you check on the crane at the start of the shift?
3. How do we keep people out from under the load?
4. What would we do if a load got stuck or the crane stopped mid-lift?

Bottom line **Check the crane, know the load, rig it right and keep everyone out from under it.**

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Topic / Tema Overhead crane safety / Seguridad con grúas viajeras

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