



LIFTING & RIGGING

Lifting and Rigging Safety

Lifting and rigging work tasks are considered high-hazard activities by many companies due to the numerous associated risks. These tasks involve significant hazards that can arise when lifting loads with cranes or equipment. To ensure safety, it is crucial not only to understand proper rigging techniques but also to recognize and mitigate the various hazards involved in this type of work.

Lifting and Rigging Incidents

When thinking about lifting and rigging incidents, the first scenario that often comes to mind is the failure of a sling, wire rope, or chain, leading to a dropped load. While these incidents typically have the most severe consequences, they are not the only risks present. Other, less severe incidents account for the majority of injuries and property damage. These include:

- **Sprains and strains** from improper manual handling.
- **Falls** from elevated surfaces.
- **Crush injuries** caused by improper load control or pinch points.
- **Electrocutions** from contact with power lines.
- **Struck-by incidents** involving moving or swinging loads.

Additional hazards during lifting operations may include swinging loads, handling heavy rigging manually, holding tag lines, moving equipment, pinch points, trip hazards, and slippery surfaces.

Lifting and Rigging Safe Work Practices

To minimize risks and prevent incidents during lifting operations, follow these safe work practices:

1. **Training**
 - Ensure all personnel in the lift area are trained on the scope of work, hazards, and mitigations associated with the task.
2. **Lift Plan**
 - Develop a written lift plan before starting work. The plan should address rigging techniques, angles, equipment lifting capacities, and other critical details.
3. **Pre-Lift Area Planning**
 - Plan the travel path and identify potential lines of fire before the lift begins. This prevents striking other objects or the need to adjust equipment once the load is airborne.
4. **Rigging Inspections**
 - Inspect all rigging equipment before each lift. If multiple lifts are planned throughout the day, periodically recheck the equipment's integrity to ensure continued safety.
5. **Proper Rigging Storage**
 - Store rigging equipment correctly after completing lifting operations to protect it from damage and ensure its readiness for future use.
6. **Maintain Distance from the Load**
 - Always use tag lines or push sticks to maintain a safe distance from the load, avoiding direct contact whenever possible.

Summary

This list highlights key hazards and safe practices but is not exhaustive. Proper planning, hazard awareness, and adherence to safety measures are essential to preventing incidents during lifting and rigging activities. Every lift is unique, and it's vital to identify and address the hazards specific to each situation.

For more information on lifting and rigging safety, visit the **Procedures** tab of the online safety support center at www.iws.support. Resources such as *Cranes and Rigging* and *Material Handling* are available to support your safety efforts.