



STOP the DROP Task Force

Safe Cargo



Another high hazard activity within dropped object safety is the lifting of materials to higher levels. The term Safe Cargo refers to how you are going to secure loads when transporting them to ensure there is no failure and exposure to falls or drops. There are many ways you can transport and move materials with cranes, forklifts or skid steers. All are used daily on jobsites and all have their own hazards.

Cranes & Rigging

Prior to lifting any load, we need to ensure the load is completely secure and rigged in a safe configuration. Only those that are certified are allowed to rig loads and signal cranes. Rigging needs to be rated for the load and inspected prior to use. One of the main reasons for dropped loads during crane activities is due to using non-rated pick points, or non-approved rigging configurations. We need to review the manufacturers design to ensure that pick points are approved, and that the proper rigging configuration is used.

Another common cause of dropped loads is because rigging is damaged or cut due to sharp edges on materials and equipment. All sharp edges need to have softeners installed, or rigging must be armored prior to lifting a load with sharp edges.

Loose items must always be physically secured or contained in an appropriate engineered lifting box. Pallets cannot be lifted directly and requires the use of an engineered lifting device. Wood boxes, crates and barrels cannot be rigged directly. Items can never be attached to a load through improvised means, such as the incident where the post was connected to the winch with tie-wire.



All loads also need to be inspected prior to lifting to ensure that all left behind items have been removed, such as lumber, wrapping bands, tools and debris. These items can easily be forgotten and become dropped objects.

Other Lifting Activities

The safe cargo principle isn't just relevant to cranes, but other activities that we use to lift material on our projects. An example of this could be using a pulley to lift material up to another level, like you might see as part of a scaffold system. As well as using other mechanical equipment to get the material up to higher heights.



Prior to lifting loads with forklifts for example, we need to ensure that the loads are secured and stable. If a load can potentially become unstable during transport or lifting, we need to physically secure the load to the forklift. Loose items must be contained as well as stacked materials should be shrink wrapped, banded, or secured by other means.

There have been many incidents involving material and equipment falling off trucks during the loading and unloading process. Some of these have caused serious injuries from unrecognized pinch and crush points. We need to ensure we follow loading/unloading policies and keep people out of exclusion zones.



Ensure we are taking the time to evaluate your cargo transportation activities on your jobsite. Inspect every load before moving it and make sure all the hazards are addressed before performing the work. We expect everyone to follow the Safe Cargo principles and work towards eliminating the hazards on your jobsite around Stop the Drop.

Only those certified should perform rigging activities

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