

Crane Booms and Power Lines

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings. Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it. Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

BEGINNING THE MEETING

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide. The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting. At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Our topic today is 'Electrocution' or 'What Can Happen When a Crane Boom Hits an Energized Power Line'.

Most of you who have spent time in heavy construction know of someone who has been killed or severely shocked or burned by such an accident. The cause is generally poor judgment or forgetfulness. When a job is being planned, power lines should be located and the voltages determined. Provisions should be made to eliminate the danger by having the current shut off or to minimize the danger by setting up safe procedures. Make sure you know if the current is shut off and that you understand the established safe procedures when working around power lines.

A Case Study:

Forgetfulness is bad enough. But poor judgment is even worse, as illustrated by the following example: A change of work area made it necessary to position a crane under a power line. With the boom in the air, the crane was rolled forward and then stopped. Supposedly, it was far enough away from the line to allow the boom to be lowered without hitting the wires. But the boom didn't clear.

Who Was At Fault?

Who was guilty of poor judgment? The whole crew, which includes the operator and the men who guided the movement and gave the signals are guilty. What should the men have done? Obviously, they should have stopped the crane farther back. They also should have kept a close watch on the block as the boom was being lowered, and signaled the operator to stop when it became evident that the boom was going to hit the power line. Had they done so, the crane could have backed off and completed the lowering without a mishap.

But what about the operator? He knew the length of the boom and the arc it made when being raised or lowered. He should have allowed enough distance to provide clearance, regardless of the ground men's lack of judgment. All crew members share the responsibility for preventing accidents in situations such as the one described. All must be alert at all times; first to protect themselves, and second, to protect the other person. If someone appears to be forgetful or inattentive, wake that individual up.

Worth Repeating:

When you're working close to a power line, use good judgment. Keep boom, cable block and tag line a minimum of ten feet away. Even greater clearance may be required, depending on voltage and work conditions. Remember that in some cases the current can jump from power line to the boom or cable without contact being made.

GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints ? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

ENDING THE MEETING

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

Comments:
