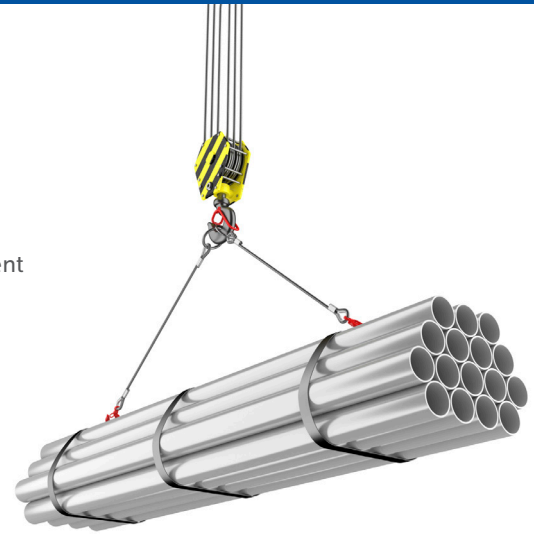


In hoisting operations, rigging is only as strong as the weakest link. Workers' lives depend on the strength of that link. Because of this, OSHA updated their Cranes & Derricks in Construction standard to require qualified riggers. The standard states, "Employers must use qualified riggers during hoisting activities for assembly and disassembly work and whenever workers are within the fall zone and hooking, unhooking, or guiding a load, or doing the initial connection of a load to a component or structure."

OSHA Requirements

- A qualified rigger is a rigger who meets the criteria for a qualified operator. An employer is responsible for determining whether a person is qualified to perform specific rigging tasks. Each qualified rigger may have different credentials or experience.
- A qualified rigger is a person who:
 - Possesses a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing
 - Has extensive knowledge, training, and experience
 - Can successfully demonstrate the ability to solve problems related to rigging loads
- A person designated as a qualified rigger must have the ability to properly rig the load for a particular job. It does not mean that a rigger must be qualified to do every type of rigging job.
- Each load that requires rigging has unique properties that can range from the simple to the complex. For example, a rigger may have extensive experience in rigging structural components and other equipment to support specific construction activities. Such experience may have been gained over many years. However, this experience does not automatically qualify the rigger to rig unstable, unusually heavy, or eccentric loads that may require a tandem lift, multiple lifts, or use of custom rigging equipment. In essence, an employer must make sure the person can do the rigging work needed for the exact types of loads and lifts for a particular job. They also must be able to use the equipment and rigging that will be used for that job.
- Riggers do not have to be certified by an accredited organization or assessed by a third party. Employers may choose to use a third-party entity to assess the qualifications of the rigger candidate, but they are not required to do so.



Rigging Safety Tips

- Check the weather conditions before you start a lift. If the weather is extreme, postpone the lift until the weather conditions improve.
- Make sure the system of communication you have in place with the rig operator is effective and functioning properly.
- Check the lift area and load path for obstructions such as buildings, poles, towers, power lines, antennas, satellite dishes, etc.
- Make sure the receiving area is firm, flat, and free from loose objects that could fly up when the load is delivered.
- Be sure to establish the weight of the load, and determine the load's center of gravity.
- Determine the proper type of hitch based on the type of load.



- Inspect all rigging hardware before you use it. Never use defective hardware. Take defective hardware out of service immediately.
- Remember to protect slings from cuts and tears when lifting items with sharp edges.
- Never make a shackle-to-shackle connection.
- Always wear a hardhat and sturdy work gloves.
- Be sure that your work boots or work shoes have built-in toe protection. It is especially important to have this protection when you are receiving a load.
- Whenever possible, plan to rig the load so that it will be lifted straight up, which will help prevent the load from swinging.
- Never tie two or more slings together.
- Always connect two slings with an appropriate-sized shackle.
- Never attach a sling directly to a lifting lug; always use a shackle. Never run a sling through a set of lifting lugs or eyebolts. Doing so creates too much tension on the lugs or eyebolts.
- Never choke below the threads on synthetic web slings.
- “Never saddle a dead horse.” When using wire rope clips, be sure to attach the wire rope clips with the inside curve of the U-bolt up against the very end (dead end) of the wire. Attach the inside of the U-bolt clip (saddle) up against the live end of the wire.

References

- OSHA standard 1926.1400

IMPORTANT NOTICE - The information and suggestions presented by Western National Insurance Company in this Technical Bulletin are for your consideration in your loss prevention efforts. They are not intended to be complete or definitive in identifying all hazards associated with your business, preventing workplace accidents, or complying with any safety related, or other, laws or regulations. You are encouraged to alter them to fit the specific hazards of your business and to have your legal counsel review all of your plans and company policies.