

New OSHA crane standards mandate operator training

In the USA the Occupational Health and Safety Administration has finally published the draft new crane standards, some four years after the Crane & Derrick Advisory Committee completed it. The new standard, the first update in 40 years, is summarised best by OSHA itself:

"OSHA is proposing a rule to protect employees from the hazards associated with hoisting equipment when used to perform construction activities. Under this proposed rule, employers would first determine whether the ground is sufficient to support the anticipated weight of hoisting equipment and associated loads.

The employer then would be required to assess hazards within the work zone that would affect the safe operation of hoisting equipment, such as those of power lines and objects or personnel that would be within the work zone or swing radius of the hoisting equipment.

Finally, the employer would be required to ensure that the equipment is in safe operating condition via required inspections and employees in the work zone are trained to recognize hazards associated with the use of the equipment and any related duties that they are assigned to perform."

A key element of the new standards calls for all operators to be certified as competent by a third party crane testing body within four years of the standard being finalised.

A big yes When asked "Should manufacturers encourage aerial lift users to get a PAL card?" In an online poll on Vertikal.Net over 74 percent of those who voted said Yes. As of Saturday November 15th a total of 677 votes had been cast.

Builder fined £4,000 for fall

Berneslai Homes Ltd of Springfield Street Barnsley, was fined £2,000 and ordered to pay £2,022 costs at Barnsley Magistrates Court earlier this month, after pleading guilty to breaching the Work at Height Regulations. On the 20 January 2007 employee Paul Pickering was carrying out emergency repair work on the roof of a council property at Darfield Road, Barnsley following strong gales. Pickering fell five metres, breaking three ribs and suffering severe bruising. According to the HSE the lack of appropriate access equipment resulted from inadequate planning and supervision on the part of the company. HSE Inspector David Stewart said: "This incident caused serious injuries but it could have easily been much worse. If the work had been planned properly, with correct supervision, it would never have happened."

Fall from tower costs shopfitters £32,000

E&F Joinery of Hailsham, Sussex, has been fined £20,000 plus costs of £11,895 after a 67 year old man fell three metres from an alloy scaffold tower while he was fitting ductwork to a shop at the Exchange shopping centre in Enfield, London on 15th September 2006.

E&F Joinery was held responsible for the accident, even though the injured man, Robert Wilson, was not one of its employees, as it was in control of the work and therefore responsible for planning and supervision. The tower did not have the correct edge protection and had

not been inspected before use.

The company admitted three breaches of the Work at Height Regulations: failing to properly plan the work, failing to provide suitable edge protection and failing to inspect the scaffold tower before it was used. Judge Richard Hone said that in setting the fine, he had taken E&F's deteriorating financial situation into account - revenues have dropped by a third so far this financial year.

Wilson was in a coma for some time after the accident, and has been left permanently disabled.



Michael Atkinson moved along the crane's jib to rescue the operator from his cab

Bravery award for crane rescue

A bravery award has been presented to Michael Atkinson of Croydon fire station's blue watch, who led the rescue of the tower crane operator whose crane collapsed on the Croydon Park Hotel, in June last year. The superstructure of the Comedil tower crane, owned by Select, flipped over backwards during a climbing sequence. The operator was left suspended in his cab over the side of the hotel 40 metres above the ground. Atkinson used line rescue, a relatively new technique at the time, to move along the crane's jib to reach the injured man.

After giving him first aid and strapping him into a rescue harness, Atkinson attached them both to the hook of an adjacent crane which lowered them to safety. Receiving the award at the Lords cricket ground earlier this month, Atkinson said: "I am very happy to receive this award and dedicate it to the hard work and training of Croydon's Fire Rescue Unit."

Who trained him then?

This man was spotted in West Yorkshire recently, hard to imagine he had received any ladder training?

This American TV camera crew using a make shift platform during the Kiwi Golf Challenge. This just a day after a 135ft boom lift had tipped over, crushing a minibus



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