

Crane Operator Dies after Falling from Crane Turntable Deck *

Industry: Specialty trade contractor (crane service)
Task: Stepping down from rear of crane turntable deck
Occupation: Crane operator
Type of Incident: Fall from elevation

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Incident Date: July 26, 2010
Case No.: 10WA046
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In July of 2010, a 61-year-old crane operator was fatally injured when he fell from a 120-ton mobile hydraulic crane's turntable deck while attempting to dismount. The operator and a crane service company oiler were dispatched by their employer to a school to lift an HVAC unit to the building's roof. The crane operator and oiler were setting up the crane in preparation for the lift, when they discovered that there was an electrical problem causing the telescoping boom to break down. The operator phoned the company electrician, who indicated that he would be there shortly to make repairs. The two workers decided to go and wait in the shade. The oiler dismounted first from the turntable deck at the crane's rear and turned away from the victim, who was about to dismount. The coworker heard the victim make an exclamation. He turned to see him falling head first to the concrete sidewalk 4 to 5 feet below. Emergency medical services and police responded and the victim was transported to a hospital. He died of his injuries nine days later.



Requirements

- Guardrails, handholds, and steps must be provided on cranes for easy access to the cab. See WAC 296-155-53400(26).
- Cranes manufactured after Feb. 2, 2012 must meet the following criteria: See WAC 296-155-53403(b).
 - Steps, handholds, ladders and guardrails/railings/grabrails must meet the criteria of SAE J185 (May 2003) or ISO 11660-2:1994(E) except where infeasible.
 - Walking/stepping surfaces, except for crawler treads, must have slip-resistant features/properties (such as diamond plate metal, strategically placed grip tape, expanded metal, or slip-resistant paint).
- Crane steps, handholds, ladders, and guardrails/railings/grabrails must be maintained in good condition. See WAC 296-155-53403(a).

Recommendations

- Identify and address fall hazards associated with workers mounting and dismounting from mobile equipment.
- Face toward the equipment and maintain 3-points of contact—2 hands and 1 foot, or 1 hand and 2 feet—when mounting and dismounting, so as to allow for better balance and use of steps and handholds/handrails.
- Wear footwear with slip resistant soles.
- Never jump except during emergencies.

State Wide Statistics: This was number 56 out of 89 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2010, and was number 6 out of 7 construction-related fatalities.

**This bulletin was developed to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State and is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.*

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