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Toolbox Talk – Overhead Dangers and Suspended Loads

Date _____ **Company Name** _____
Supervisor _____ **Job Name** _____

There are many reasons for using machines to lift loads within a construction site. This practice both saves time and prevents worker injuries. However, suspending a load in the air presents a whole new set of hazards. If a load is so heavy that it must be lifted by a piece of heavy equipment, then a fallen load can seriously injure or kill any unsuspecting employees on the ground. In today's Toolbox Talk, we will discuss how to prevent the common hazards caused by suspended loads.

Guidelines for Discussion

As contractors, we deal with overhead dangers and suspended loads on a day to day basis. We work with heavy materials, so it only makes sense to use heavy machinery in the transportation of these materials. However, an unmonitored or unsecured load can prove devastating for a construction site. Use these tips to ensure the safety of you and your coworkers when working with suspended loads:

- If you are the operator, always carry your loads close to the ground.
- Use tag lines on loads whenever possible.
- Designate only one signal person. This prevents confusion for the operator and for other employees.
- The signal person should stand in a position where he/she can clearly observe both the load and the operator at all times.
- Never maneuver the load over other workers: ALWAYS keep the hoist area clear.
- Alert onsite employees when a load is being transported near their working area.
- Be sure loads are properly rigged and secured.
- Make sure the hoisting and rigging equipment is in good workable condition. Routinely inspect for damages.
- The hoisting speed should be a controlled, steady pace. Jerky movements and high speeds can result in loss of control over the load.
- Monitor weather conditions, and be especially cautious during windy days.

It is important that the overhead danger of moving materials across a worksite be monitored by all ground-level employees. The signal person and operator are most responsible for the safe transportation of a load, but all workers should be aware of the overhead hazard. Stay clear of the hoisting area, and pay attention to other factors that could cause a load to drop in your direction. Once a load begins to fall, that load is difficult to avoid.

Additional Discussion Notes:

- If you are transporting a load on an excavation site, you must take extra precautions to ensure that there are no employees below the hoisting area.
- At the end of this discussion, you can also take some time to designate a signal person, and go over the meaning of different hand signals.

Safety Recommendations

Job Specific Topics

Attendees

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