SHARP START

April 7 — Still in Service

Employee got a come a long out of tool crib and it had a broke hook latch.	**Replaced the broken latch with a new one.**

A come-a-long was pulled from the tool crib and found to have a broken hook latch. It was still sitting there like it was ready to be used.

On the surface, it looked fine. Chain was intact. Body was solid. It would probably still pull. But that latch isn't there for looks.

It's what keeps the hook seated and the load from slipping free when tension shifts. Without it, the connection isn't secure — especially if the load moves, bounces, or loses tension for even a second.

Nothing had failed yet.

But that's how these situations exist a damaged tool stays in rotation because it "still works." Over time, that becomes normal.

Until the moment it doesn't. And when tension is involved, failure isn't gradual. It's instant.

This wasn't about misuse. It was about accepting a defect as good enough.

Hazards

- Load release due to unsecured hook
- Sudden shift in tension
- Struck-by from released or shifting loa
- Pinch points during load movement
- Equipment failure under load
- Line of fire exposure to stored energy

Stats

- Equipment defects are a common contributing factor in lifting incidents
- Stored energy releases often result in sudden, severe injuries
- Many incidents occur when damaged equipment remains in service
- Small component failures can lead to full system failure under load

Words of Wisdom

- If it's damaged, it's not ready
- "Still works" isn't a safety check
- Small defects don't stay small under load

Pause and Think

When a tool looks mostly fine, it's easy to overlook what's missing or damaged. We've all seen equipment that "still gets the job done," and over time that becomes acceptable.

But familiarity with a tool can make defects easier to ignore. And when nothing bad has happened yet, it reinforces the idea that it's okay.

That's how risk builds quietly not from one big failure, but from small things being tolerated.

- Do I inspect tools before putting them under load?
- Would I recognize a missing or damaged safety component?
- Am I willing to stop and remove defective equipment from service?
- Am I trusting appearance more than condition?