SHARP START

June 10 — What Don't you Know?

Employee was preparing to use nylon chokers and the overhead crane to move a fabricated caged ladder from the fab table. When asked about the choker weight rating and the weight of the ladder, he replied that he can read the tag on the choker for rating but did not know the weight of the ladder. This could lead to rigging overload or rigging failure	**This was a learning moment for the employee as the chokers were rated for thousands of pounds in any configuration and the overhead crane is rated for 10 tons and the ladder weighs less than 1 thousand pounds. After discussing this scenario, the employee agreed with knowing all variables when rigging or lifting anything**

Most lifting incidents don't happen because someone knowingly overloads a crane. They happen because an assumption was made. The load looked light. The equipment looked adequate. Everything seemed fine.

An employee was preparing to use nylon chokers and an overhead crane to move a fabricated caged ladder from a fabrication table. During a conversation about the lift, the employee was asked two simple questions: What is the weight rating of the chokers, and what does the load weigh?

The employee could identify the choker rating but did not know the weight of the ladder.

As the discussion continued, it was determined that the chokers were rated for thousands of pounds, the crane was rated for ten tons, and the ladder weighed less than one thousand pounds. The lift could have been completed safely. However, the conversation highlighted an important lesson: safe lifting decisions require knowing all the critical information, not just part of it.

Rigging and lifting activities depend on more than equipment capacity. Load weight, center of gravity, sling angle, rigging configuration, travel path, and equipment limitations all play a role in determining whether a lift can be performed safely. Missing just one piece of information can lead to poor decisions and increase the potential for dropped loads, equipment damage, or serious injury.

One of the challenges with routine lifts is that familiarity can create confidence. When employees perform similar lifts regularly, it's easy to assume the load is within capacity or that the equipment being used is sufficient. That's why taking a few extra moments to verify the details before a lift begins is so important.

In this case, the discussion became a valuable learning opportunity and reinforced the importance of understanding every aspect of a lift before it takes place.

Hazards

- Rigging overload
- Dropped loads
- Struck-by hazards
- Equipment Damage
- Improper rigging selection
- Uncontrolled load movement

Words of Wisdom

Safe lifting starts with good information. Before every lift, make sure you know the weight of the load, the capacity of your equipment, and any conditions that could affect the lift.

Pause and Think

- What information should be verified before performing a lift?
- Have you ever assumed a load weight instead of knowing it?
- How can routine lifts create a false sense of confidence?
- What could happen if only part of the lift information is verified?
- Who should be involved when questions arise about a lift plan?

Closing Thought

Knowing the capacity of your equipment is important. Knowing the weight of the load is essential. Safe lifts depend on understanding both.