

**Toolbox talks**

**Lifting accessories**

**Background information:**

The term 'lifting accessories' covers any piece of equipment used for lifting, that is between the load to be lifted, and the lifting appliance's hook. This covers items such as chain slings, wire rope slings, webbing slings, eyebolts, and shackles. All lifting accessories must be tested and certificated before first use. Examined by a competent person at six monthly periods and visually inspected before use. A large proportion of the accidents that arise from lifting operations stem from faulty slinging, therefore a competent person, ie a slinger / signaller, must be appointed to carry out all activities concerning the use of lifting gear.

**Hazards:**

- Falls of material due to poor slinging
- Overloading of lifting gear in excess of its Safe Working Load (SWL)
- Failure of lifting gear through poor maintenance and poor visual inspection arrangements.

**Health and safety points:**

All lifting accessories must be stored in a clean environment, away from sources of damp. A quarantine area for lifting accessories unfit for use must be available.

**Chains**

- You must select the right chain for the job and check for deformity, cracked or cut links
- Make sure it is marked with the SWL which must not be exceeded
- Never tie a knot in a chain to shorten it
- Use only for their intended purpose, do no abuse, (ie correct angles) 90°, 45°, 120° maximum.

**Shackles**

- Use the right type for the job and make sure it is marked with its SWL which must not be exceeded
- Carefully examine for damage and distortion
- Always screw the pin right in and check at regular intervals that it does not come loose in use
- Only use proper pins to secure the shackle, (ie the pin certificated tested with shackle)
- Defective shackles should be destroyed to prevent further usage.

**Slings**

- Select the right sling for the job. Ensure it is marked with the SWL and suitable for the load to be lifted
- Reject slings if there is any sign of wear or damage
- Protect slings with suitable packing from the sharp edges or corners of the load.

**Hooks**

- Check for distortion, cracks, cuts and dents
- Do not load the point of a hook
- Ensure safety catches operate freely
- Never use anything other than a safety hook or "C" hook.

**Eye Bolts**

- When using an eye bolt make sure it is the right type for the lift you propose
- Examine for damaged threads, cuts, cracks or dents
- Reject eye bolts if any visual wear is detected on threads
- Use a shackle if the hook does not fit into the eyebolt.

**Question time:**

- Q What does SWL stand for?
- Q How often should we physically check lifting gear?
- Q Use a shackle if the hook does not fit into the eye bolt.

**Have you got any questions?**

Record questions on the attendance sheet.

**Safety reminder:**

**Never use home made hooks or eyebolts. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Never 'bodge' a shackle by using anything other than the proper bolt.**

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