



# Toolbox Talks

## *Spotlight on Safety*



## Sling Safety

All construction workers take part in materials handling. As a consequence, employees are often injured because slings are not maintained and used correctly. Using slings and rigging may look like an easy operation, but only workers who are authorized and have actually been trained in how to use slings and rigging are permitted to rig loads for lifting.

Slings are generally made of chain, wire rope, metal mesh, natural rope fiber, synthetic fiber rope, or synthetic web. Visually inspect all slings for cuts, tears, fraying, elongated or worn chain links, and damaged hardware prior to use. Never use a damaged sling!

### Safe Lifting Practices

There are four primary factors that should be taken into consideration when using slings and rigging:

- 1.** The size, weight, configuration, and center of gravity of the load.
- 2.** The number of legs and the angle the sling makes with the horizontal line. As the angle formed by the sling leg and the horizontal line decreases, the load placed on the sling leg increases.
- 3.** The rated capacity of slings varies depending on the type of sling and the type of connecting device or hitch. Never exceed the rated capacity of the sling.
- 4.** The maintenance of the slings. Slings must be inspected before use. Damaged slings and rigging should be tagged and removed from service.

### Some do's and don'ts to remember when using slings:

- ▲ Select one crew member to act as the signal-person. The equipment operator should take directions from that person only.
- ▲ Know the sling's rated capacity and never overload a sling. Use the proper hitch.
- ▲ If you must hold the sling in position be sure your hand is clear of any pinch points.
- ▲ Use tag lines to control the load.
- ▲ Never stand under or allow anyone else to stand under a raised load.
- ▲ Position yourself so you don't get caught in between the load and a stationary object.
- ▲ Stay away from stacked material that may be knocked over by a swinging load.
- ▲ Remove unnecessary objects from where the load will be placed.
- ▲ Keep your feet, hands, and body out from under the load and clear of pinch points when lowering or setting a load.
- ▲ Never leave a load suspended in the air.
- ▲ Never ride on the equipment or load.
- ▲ Never shorten slings with knots, bolts, or other makeshift devices.
- ▲ Never use damaged or kinked slings. Remove them from service and destroy them.
- ▲ Pad slings to protect them from the sharp edges of the loads they are lifting.

***Using slings and rigging may look easy, but rigging, lifting, and moving loads is dangerous.***

***If you need assistance, ask your foreman or the equipment operator.***