SAFETY COMMITTEE NEWS BULLETIN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CONSTRUCTION SAFETY COUNCIL

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## Understanding the Requirements for Rigger Certification, or do I mean... *Qualification?*

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As a trainer for the Construction Safety Council, I'm exposed to certain trends in construction safety. One such trend is a growing request from contractors to provide rigger certification training. As an electrical contractor, you may be responsible to prepare certain loads to be lifted by a crane and communicate with the crane operator to put the load where you want it; this would require the use of a qualified rigger and a properly trained crane signal person. And, because of certain OSHA regulations that pertain to signal persons and riggers, more and more host employers and general contractors are asking subcontractors to produce evidence of training for these two important job activities.

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First off, OSHA does not require a rigger to be <u>certified</u>; the term used to describe a properly trained rigger is qualified. By definition, a qualified rigger is one who meets the criteria for a qualified person. A qualified person is one who:

- Possesses a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing, or
- Has extensive knowledge, training, and experience, and
- Can successfully demonstrate the ability to solve problems related to rigging loads.

This means that an employer must determine whether a person is qualified to perform specific rigging tasks. Each qualified rigger may have different credentials or experience. So, my question back to those who are asking for rigger certification is who is asking and whose certificate do they recognize? I think there is a confusion as to what host employers are asking and what is required.

What is required is stated above; someone who is knowledgeable, someone who has received training and someone who is experienced enough to demonstrate the ability to properly rig a load. The person designated as the qualified rigger must have the ability to properly rig the load for a particular job. It does not mean that a rigger must be qualified to do every type of rigging job, just the one they doing. Each load might require rigging that has unique properties and can range from the simple to the complex. For example, an electrician might have experience rigging such loads as bundles of pipe, spools of wire, lighting fixtures or other crated materials. And, the most common type of rigging that an electrician might use are synthetic web slings. Anyone who has experience with the application of synthetic web slings and can demonstrate their ability to properly select, use and inspect synthetic web slings would be considered qualified. However, if handed a different type of sling, such as a wire rope sling or alloy steel chain sling, the person may not be considered qualified, even though this person may be in possession of a training certificate. The employer will always have the ultimate responsibility to ensure proper training.

Organizations who do claim to offer rigger certification would be recognized by an independent credentialing authority, such as the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). One such organization who is recognized by the NCCA is the National Commission for the Certification for Crane Operators (NCCCO). However, if not one of these organizations are specified, then an electrical contractor might be able to satisfy this requirement through internal documentation.

Most importantly, just make sure that all rigging is inspected prior to each use and be familiar with all regulations that apply to specific types of rigging. For more information on OSHA's rigging standards or other industry consensus standards, refer to 29 CFR 1926.251 and ASME B30.9 – Slings. To learn more about your responsibilities on rigger qualification, sign up for the Construction Safety Council's Rigging Hazards Awareness course, call me anytime at (800) 552-7744 x 213, or send me an email at psatti@buildsafe.org – I'm your friend in safety.

The Construction Safety Council in partnership with PowerForward DuPage (NECA-IBEW 701 LMCC) would like to remind you to *Work Smart, Build Safe!* 

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