



CRANE SAFETY

Jokes about nagging back pain get standup comedians a lot of. For the safety of everyone who works with or around cranes, it is important to be aware of the electrocution hazards around overhead power lines. Before beginning work near power lines, power line owners should be notified of the date, time, and type of work involved and their permission should be requested to de-energize and ground power lines or provide insulated barriers.

To protect workers against electrocution when operating or working around cranes near overhead power lines the following safe work practices are recommended:

- Participate in all crane safety programs offered.
- Know the location and voltage of all overhead power lines at the job site.
- Evaluate the job site before beginning work to decide the size and type of machinery to use and the safest areas for machinery operation and material storage.
- Before work begins, de-energize power lines, erect insulated barriers to prevent physical contact with the energized lines, and establish safe clearance between the energized lines and boomed equipment.
- Post warnings on cranes cautioning operators to maintain safe clearances between energized power lines and their equipment.
- Mark safe routes where cranes can travel beneath power lines.
- Assume all power lines are energized and maintain Cal/OSHA crane clearances.
- Operate cranes only if trained in safe operating procedures and Cal/OSHA regulations.
- Operate cranes at a slower-than-normal rate in power line areas.
- Use caution when moving over uneven ground that could cause the crane to weave or bob into power lines.
- Use caution near long spans of overhead power lines, since wind can cause the power lines to sway back and forth and reduce the clearance between the crane and the power line.
- Limits the use of cage-type boom guards, insulated lines, ground rods, nonconductive links, and proximity warning devices. Don't use these as a substitute for de-energizing and grounding lines or maintaining safe clearances.
- Where it is difficult for the crane operator to see the power lines or see the clearance during crane movement, a signal person should be assigned to watch and give immediate warning when the crane comes close to the limits of safe clearance.

- No one should touch the crane or its load until the signal person says it's safe.
- Cage-type boom guards, insulating links, and proximity warning devices should be limited and not used as a substitute for de-energizing and grounding lines or maintaining safe clearance.
- All workers should stay well away from the crane when it's close to power lines.

If contact is made between a crane and an energized line, the crane operator should stay inside the cab and try to remove the crane from contact by moving it in the reverse direction from that which caused the contact. If the crane cannot be moved away from contact, the operator should stay inside the cab until the lines have been de-energized. Everyone else should keep away from the crane, ropes, and load, since the ground around the machine might be energized. Workers should have a quick way of calling for or getting help when an emergency occurs and all workers should be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).