



****CSRMA ALERT****

NEW Crane Operator Certification Requirements Effective June 1, 2005: Do You Know Where Your Agency Stands?

California has rounded the final turn and is headed into the home stretch in its race to make sure that all eligible crane operators are trained and certified under Title 8 provisions adopted by the Cal/OSH Standards Board in June 2003.

The Standard, adopted in June 2003, requires that after June 1, 2005, employers permit only operators who have a valid certificate of competency to operate a crane. The standard **applies to mobile and tower cranes 15,000 pounds or heavier, or with a boom length of at least 25 feet.**

To obtain certification, operators must pass a written examination, a "hands-on" test and a medical evaluation. Certification is good for five years, with a recertification waiver available for the hands-on examination for operators who have at least 1,000 hours of experience during the preceding certification period. The requirements are contained in General Industry Safety Orders 5006.1 (http://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/5006_1.html).

Employers can use an agency accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) or apply for accreditation themselves. The certifying entity, however, must not be the same organization that trains the operators, to protect the integrity of the certifying process.

THIS NEW STANDARD HAS MANY STEPS TO COMPLIANCE.

THE FOLLOWING Q&A HAS BEEN PREPARED TO HELP YOU MOVE TOWARD COMPLIANCE:

Q: What cranes are covered by the new Standard?

A: The Standard covers cranes 15,000 pounds or more with a boom length of at least 25 feet (*note: The length of the boom is taken as the straight line distance between the axis of the foot pin and the axis of the end sheave pin*). The 15,000-pound, 25-foot qualification for cranes means that many cranes will fall under the regulation (*i.e. many types of boom trucks*), as well as considerable numbers of operators, many of whom do not use cranes as their primary job.

Note: CalOSHA defines a crane as a machine used for lifting or lowering a load and moving it horizontally, in which the hoisting mechanism is an integral part of the machine. It may be driven manually or by power and may be a fixed or a mobile machine, but does not include stackers, lift trucks, power shovels, backhoes, or excavators.

The most common type of crane used by wastewater agencies is the boom-type mobile crane. CalOSHA defines this as a self-propelled crane equipped with a boom and mounted on a chassis which is supported on rubber tires, crawler treads or railway wheels running on railroad tracks.

CalOSHA defines a boom as a member section of a crane or derrick, the lower end of which is affixed to a mast, base, carriage, or support, and the upper end supports a hook or other end attachment.

Q: Which employee's are covered by the new Standard?

A: Any employee operating a crane, 15,000 pounds or more with a boom length of at least 25 feet, for any amount of time even if it is not their regular job.

Q: What are the requirements of the new Standard?

A: Employer's shall only permit operators who have a valid certificate of competency (certificate) issued in accordance with this section by an Accredited Certifying Entity for the type of crane to be used to operate a crane covered by this section. Certificates shall be issued to operators who:

For More Information, Please Contact David Patzer, CSRMA Risk Control Advisor at 707.373.9709 or at losscontrol@sbcglobal.net

1. Pass a physical examination conducted by a physician which at a minimum shall include the examination criteria specified in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) B30.5-2000 standard, Chapter 5-3.1.2(a)(1-5, 7, 8) or the U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) physical examination requirements contained in 49 CFR Sections 391.41 through 391.49.
2. Pass a substance abuse test. The level of testing shall be consistent with the standard practice for the industry where the crane is in use and this test shall be conducted by a recognized laboratory service;
3. Pass a written examination developed, validated, and administered in accordance with the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (Copyright 1999) published jointly by the Joint Committee of the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council in Measurement in Education. The exam shall test knowledge and skills identified as necessary for safe crane operations and shall, at a minimum, include the following:
 - (A) Operational characteristics and controls, including characteristic and performance questions appropriate to the crane type for which qualification is sought;
 - (B) Emergency control skills, such as a response to fire, power line contact, loss of stability, or control malfunction;
 - (C) A demonstration of basic arithmetic skills necessary for crane operation and the ability to read and comprehend the crane manufacturer's operation and maintenance instruction materials, including load capacity information (load charts) for the crane for which certification is sought;
 - (D) Knowledge of chapters 5-0 through 5-3 of The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) B30.5-2000 and B30.5a-2002 Addenda to the standard for mobile and locomotive cranes or chapters 4-0 through 4-3 of the ASME B30.4-1996 standard for portal, tower, and pedestal cranes or Chapter 3-3 of the ASME B 30.3-1996 standard for Construction Tower Cranes, depending on the type of crane(s) the operator intends to operate.
4. Pass a "hands-on" examination to demonstrate proficiency in operating the specific type of crane, which at a minimum shall include pre-start and post-start inspection, maneuvering skills, shutdown, and securing procedures.

Q: How long are Crane Operator Certificates valid?

A: Certificates are valid for a maximum of five (5) years.

Q: Who administers the Crane Operator Certification exams?

A: An Accredited Certifying Entity issues the certificate of competency to operators who successfully demonstrate the qualifications set forth in the Standard. An Accredited Certifying Entity is any organization whose certification program is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). To date only one organization, the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (CCO), has been accredited to provide certification in California,

Q: How do Crane Operators become re-certified?

A: Crane operators are required to re-certify every five (5) years and are required to meet all of the original crane operator qualifications. Operators with at least one-thousand (1,000) hours of documented experience operating the specific type of crane for which re-certification is sought during the immediately preceding certification period and who meet the physical examination, substance abuse, and written examination requirements are not required to take the "hands-on" examination to re-certify.

Q: How do employees get practical experience operating a crane when they have no prior experience?

A: Trainees may be authorized to operate mobile or tower cranes provided they are under the direct supervision of an operator possessing a valid certificate of competency for the type of crane operated by the trainee. The term direct supervision means the supervising operator is in the immediate area of the trainee and within visual sighting distance and able to effectively communicate with the trainee. When performing direct supervision, the supervising operator must not have any other duties other than to observe the operation of the crane by the trainee.

For More Information, Please Contact David Patzer, CSRMA Risk Control Advisor at 707.373.9709 or at losscontrol@sbcglobal.net