

WHAT HAPPENED?

Tree trimmer dies after falling from crane hook

A tree trimmer suspended from the hook of a crane was killed when his line detached, dropping him more than 70 ft to the ground below.

The tree trimmer had been using crane to reach a backyard area where limbs and tree sections couldn't simply be dropped. The crane would lift the tree trimmer to the higher parts of the trees where he would attach a wire rope choker to the trunk of the tree and lower himself to area he wanted to cut.

After the cut was made, the crane held the section of tree that was cut while the tree trimmer rappelled down to the ground. The crane would then swing the section of tree, limbs still intact, around to the front of the property where a chipper truck was stationed.

One of the trees could not be reached with the 102-ft crane boom, so the operator attached a 23-ft jib extension and reeved the hoist line through the jib's sheave.

The tree trimmer then attached his gear to the crane hoist line hook and was lifted by the crane and slowly swung over the house toward the target tree. When the victim was still about 20 ft from the tree, his line detached from the hook and he fell 70 ft, suffering fatal injuries.



RELATED ONLINE RESOURCES

DOSH Directive: [Tree and Shrub Trimming, Pruning and Removal](#)
Updated: February 15, 2019



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT A FATALITY FROM HAPPENING AT YOUR WORKPLACE?

Take these steps to help ensure a safe working environment

- Meet before working on a special hazardous operation to identify all hazards specific to the job. Create an accident prevention plan that includes a fall-protection work plan.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when lifting personnel with a crane. This model crane required an approved lifting basket.
- Make sure all outriggers are fully deployed to prevent the crane from tipping over.
- Follow all appropriate regulations when using approved personnel lifting baskets.
- When it is allowable to lift workers by direct attachment to a crane's hook, make sure the worker is tied in with a climbing line and uses an arborist saddle secured to an anchor point on the boom line or crane.



Need more information?

Go to [Get Started With Safety & Health](#) for information on workplace safety and health, rules and policies, sample programs and general assistance.

Call 1-800-423-7233 to contact the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I), Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH).

Interested in a free safety and health consultation at your workplace?

The Department of Labor & Industries provides consultations, training, and technical assistance at no cost to employers. Call today to schedule a free confidential consultation or go to [Request Consultation](#) for more information. You may also call 1-800-423-7233 or visit a local L&I office and ask for the Consultation Manager.

How does an employee file a complaint?

Employees or employee representatives may file formal complaints with DOSH when they believe a safety or health hazard exists in their workplace.

Complaint forms are available from a local L&I office in both English and Spanish, or on the Web at [Safety Complaints](#).

FY12-315 [08-2012]

This bulletin was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees of a tragic loss of life. The information in this bulletin is based on preliminary data and does NOT represent final determinations of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.