

General Safety

- When using a crane, it is always recommended that the team include a trained crane operator and a spotter.
- Before moving slabs, the crane and lifting equipment, including slings, cables and clamps, should always be inspected.
- It is vital that you know your travel path in advance of the lift and know precisely where you are going to set the load down.
- All hoist controls and brakes should be tested before the beginning of a shift. Inspection processes may vary from company to company. Follow your company's inspection procedures.

Overhead Cranes

- Ensure that cranes are not loaded in excess of their rated capabilities.
- Keep employees clear of loads and make sure suspended loads are clear of obstructions.
- Never carry loads over workers or past workers.
- Using slings or handling clamped loads, it is critical to know the weight of the load.
- Lifting should not be conducted until the weight has been determined.
- Never attempt lifting a load based on guesswork.
- A typical rule of thumb is that a full slab weighs about 1,000 pounds.
- Check shipping papers prior to lifting.
- Position the clamp in the center of the slab so the load is balanced.
- Make sure the slab is inserted fully in the opening of the clamp.
- Keep hands and fingers clear of un-tensioned loads.
- Pad or protect slings from sharp edges of the load.
- Inspect the sling for wear and determine whether rating capacity is appropriate for the pending load.
- Make sure you know the size, weight and center of gravity of the load.
- Never load in excess of rated capacity.
- Never pull a sling from a suspended load under tension.
- Never shorten a sling with knots, bolts or other makeshift devices.

Clamps:

- Clamps come in different sizes, but they are designed to move only one slab at a time.
- Never lift more than one slab at time, regardless the size of clamp or how small the slabs.
- The slab being lifted should not exceed the load limit of the clamp manufacturer.
- Always wear a hard hat, gloves, safety shoes, safety glasses and a high visibility safety vest.

Importance of Teamwork:

- This usually involves a coordinated team of individuals – with at least a crane operator and a spotter.
- Make sure that everyone involved knows the uniform hand signals or voice commands. The crane operator should only accept signals from a designated rigger or a signalman.
- Use only agreed-upon hand signals or voice commands, except when it is apparent that following the signals will result in an accident.

Wet Slabs:

- Never lift wet slabs, which can cause the rubber pads in the clamp to lose their grip.
- Thoroughly dry the area before attaching the clamp.
- It is also essential that clamp pads are free from dirt, grease and oil, which can cause the clamp to lose its grip.

Conclusion:

Accidents happen in a split second, even to the most experienced slab handlers. Any slab handling hazard has the potential for disaster, including serious injury or death. You can always replace a broken slab, but, unfortunately with some accidents, you never get a second chance. You and your associates need to review this video frequently to master the fundamentals of crane slab handling and refresh your memories. If a problem arises with the equipment or in the warehouse or shop environment which can challenge the stone handling process, don't be afraid to call your supervisor.