



EMPIRE  
PACIFIC

*Risk Management, Inc.*

## CRANE COUNTERWEIGHTS

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_ Job Name \_\_\_\_\_

Although it seems like everyone knows of the danger of being struck by a crane's counterweight, this type of accident still persists in industry. The following incidents illustrate the hazards faced by employees working near cranes.

- An ironworker was tying rebar for a column in the close proximity of a crawler crane. The crane was busy positioning other material on the job site. The ironworker stepped backwards just as the crane swung its load. The ironworker was struck by the crane's counterweight.
- A laborer who was carrying a bag of cement inadvertently walked behind a crane. The crane swung and the worker was pinned between the counterweight and an adjacent pier.
- A laborer foreman stopped briefly between a lumber pile and crane to watch its operation. As the crane turned, the foreman stepped back to provide additional room for the swing of the counterweight. The foreman tripped and fell over a pile of lumber.

A common element in all of the above incidents was the failure to keep the swing area of the crane's counterweight clear of workers and materials or equipment that must be retrieved. Several solutions to this problem are:

1. Eliminate the problem -- Locate the crane in a position where there will be no pinch points created between the counterweights and nearby objects. The operator should only operate the equipment when the crane's swing area is clear.
2. Guard or warn of the hazard -- The counterweight's swing area can be barricaded to keep workers out of the hazard zone. When appropriate, warning tape can be used to identify the swing area. Painting a portion of the counterweight a bright color helps to warn of the hazard by making it more highly visible.

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# CRANE COUNTERWEIGHTS (Continued)

3. Eye to eye contact -- All workers in the area should be told to keep clear of the swing area. If material or equipment must be retrieved from within the counterweight swing area, the worker should make positive visual contact with the operator prior to entering the hazard zone. Once the worker is done, the operator and worker should once again make positive visual contact so that the operator knows it is now safe to continue full operation.

KEEP WORKERS & MATERIALS CLEAR OF THE CRANE SWING AREA!!

**Safety Recommendations:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job Specific Topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

**M.S.D.S Reviewed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**List of Attendees**

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