Is This a Safe Way to Use a Crane?

What's wrong with this picture?

Crane operations are supposed to be overseen by a competent person to ensure they're done safely. My sources tell me that such a person was, in fact, present when this photo was shot. The bad news is that apparently, he's the guy standing on top of the load being moved!

The Moral: Cranes should be used to lift objects, not people—especially people not using fall protection.

What's at Stake

Crane Accidents

Here are some sobering statistics about crane accidents:

- 8 of 100 workers killed on construction sites lose their lives in a crane accident
- 71 The average number of 71 U.S. workers are killed in crane

accidents each year

- 1,125 The estimated number of workers around the world killed in crane accidents in the past decade—and this counts just accidents involving tower cranes
- 4 The states with the most crane fatalities are, in order, Texas, Florida, California and Louisiana

How Crane Accidents Happen to You

4 Most Common Causes

According to OSHA, the 4 most common causes of crane accidents are:

1. Electrocution resulting from crane making contact with overhead power lines
2. Cranes tipping over
3. The victim falls from the crane—something that could easily happen to the worker riding the load in the photo above
4. Mechanical failures

Don’t Let this Happen to You!

Top 8 Ways to Cut Risk of Crane Accidents

1. Do a Crane Hazard Assessment at the Site

Make sure that the site where cranes are to be use used has proper soil for crane use and enough room to assemble, disassemble and use the crane.

2. Maintain Adequate Clearance from Overhead Powerlines

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ALTERNATING CURRENT: Approaching Distances for Qualified Persons

Voltage Range (phase to phase)	Minimum Approach Distance
300V and less	Avoid Contact

Over 300V, not over 750V	1 ft. 0 in. (30.5 cm)
Over 750V, not over 2kV	1 ft. 6 in. (46 cm)
Over 2kV, not over 15kV	2 ft. 0 in. (61 cm)
Over 15kV, not over 37kV	3 ft. 0 in. (91 cm)
Over 37kV, not over 87.5kV	3 ft. 6 in. (107 cm)
Over 87.5kV, not over 121kV	4 ft. 0 in. (122 cm)
Over 121kV, not over 140kV	4 ft. 6 in. (137 cm)

3. Implement a Crane Safety Plan for Each Lift

The safety plan should be overseen by a qualified person and all workers involved must be familiar with it.

4. Ensure that Crane Has Correct Capacity for the Job

Before the lift, inspect the crane and ensure that it’s suitable for the job and that has been maintained in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications. The load must also be properly rigged and inspected before the lift.

5. Make Sure a Competent Person is Present to Oversee Crane Operations

According to OSHA, competent means a person with thorough training, qualification, experience and knowledge to identify hazards. The competent person should have the authority to stop unsafe operations, not to mention greater sensitivity to safety concerns than the worker pictured riding the load in the photo above.

6. Use Qualified Operators

The crane operator must be capable of running the crane and competent with load charts, pre-inspection, and set-up.

7. Use Qualified Signal Persons

There must be a method for signaling and the person(s) who performs signaling operations must be capable of doing his/her/their job properly.

8. Train All Affected Workers in Safe Crane Operation

Safety training must be provided to any workers who are involved with or in the vicinity of the area where the lift occurs. Among other things, such workers must be familiar with the signaling methods and signals used to perform the lift.

Prevent Crane Accidents & Ensure Compliance with OSHA Requirements