



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members

Chain Use and Wear Safety Message

When securing or lifting heavy loads, it is common to use metal chains. To operate as intended, workers must use chains per the manufacturer's specifications. Additionally, it is vital to inspect chains for wear or damage before use. Overloading a chain or using a worn chain can result in damage to the load and serious injuries.

Chain Wear Hazards

There is a significant risk of chain failure if the chain is worn, damaged, or corroded. A chain failure when rigging or hauling can result in cargo damage, serious injuries, or even death. Before using any chain or chain sling, visually inspect the chain for any signs of wear. Common signs of chain wear include:

- Worn link - wear at the bends of the link
- Bent link - indents or distortions in the link
- Gouged link - cut or crack of the link
- Stretched link - increase in length (more than 5%)

Chain Use Best Practices

The Occupational Safety and Health Association requires that all chains have "permanently affixed and legible identification markings as prescribed by the manufacturer that indicates the recommended safe working load." Before using a chain for any purpose, ensure you are using a suitable chain for the job.

- Never use a chain that has a kink or a knot in it.
- Never shorten a chain by knotting, wiring, or bolting.
- When lifting a sharp object, protect the chain with adequate padding.
- Do not expose an alloy chain to temperatures greater than 400 degrees Fahrenheit.