Chain Sling Failure

There are some critical chain safety tips that we should all keep in mind when working with chain slings. These tips will prolong the life of the chain and prevent unexpected failures.

- Never pick up materials that are heavier than the specified safe working load limit of the sling, hook and hoist. If you don't know the safe load limit, find out. This practice can elongate links and cause fatigue in the sling even for a short time.
- Loads should be raised vertically. Don't try to drag heavy loads with an overhead hoist. It puts a severe strain on the hook at the chain links.
- Never splice a chain by inserting a bolt between two links. This will damage the links and the bolts may fail under far less loads than the chain.
- Never put a strain on a kinked chain. Take up the slack slowly and be sure that every link in the chain seats properly.
- Do not use a hammer to force a hook over a chain link. This could damage both the hook and the link.
- Avoid dragging chain over the floor or ground. If the surface is hard, concrete for example, it could cause serious wear.
- Remember, if you decrease the angle between the legs of a chain sling and the horizontal it increases the load in the legs of sling.
- Always be sure that the load is properly set in the bowl of the hook. Loading on the point can overload the hook causing it to spread.
- When not in use, store chain in suitable racks. Don't let chain lie on the ground or floor for extended periods.
- Always inspect the sling before you use it. Check for elongation, cracks, severe corrosion, and serious nicks, gouges and abrasion. If you doubt the safety of the chain, report the conditions.

When working around hoists and slings, stay alert. The major source of injury is crushed fingers and hands that are placed into pinch points. Keep your hands clear of pinch points and keep your mind on the job.