

Closed-Top Container Unloading Safety Overview

Refer to sign-in sheet for attendees (note: a separate meeting should be held with all absent employees).

1. Overview:

The following slab-handling safety guidelines have been carefully developed and used in the handling of millions of slabs. Used in tandem with your own company's operating and safety procedures, they can help safeguard your well-being and protect other workers and customers who visit your facility.

2. Unloading Closed-top Containers:

- Use bolt cutters to cut the tamper-evident lock and secure the doors open with safety straps. Chock chassis wheels. Ensure the dock plate is secured in place.
- Remove all bracing blocks and nails from the container floor. This is done before removing any of the top bracing. The removal of the bracing is done in a specific sequence to keep warehousemen clear of bundles that may shift or that are unstable. Starting from the right of the rear row of bundles in the container, remove the bracing from the first bundle.
- For safety, the unloader must remove one side at a time, one bundle at a time, and from the furthest brace to the closest brace. This will result in only one bundle being freed, and the unloader will be clear of any shifting weight. Then, remove bracing at the rear of the container of the first bundle only, while making sure that the unloader is clear from shifting material.
- Bundle extraction can be done with a specialized forklift clamp attachment designed for this purpose. It also can be accomplished with a method using chains and forklift without an attachment. Follow your employer's slab moving procedures. Only use fork lift attachments that are approved for use with the fork lift by the fork lift manufacturer.
- When using specialized equipment, the forklift lifts the bundle slightly and backs it out of the rear of the container, leaving the end of the bundle still on the lip of the container. At this point, a second forklift and boom is used to cable or strap the bundle while the bundle is still secured from shifting by the first forklift. Once cables are taut, the attachment can be removed. Secure the bundle using the clamp attachment and then remove the last bracing at the rear of the container for the first bundle only, while making sure that the unloader is clear from shifting material.
- This procedure is continued for the next bundle: remove the front brace, then the rear.
- The procedure changes for the last two bundles. After cutting the bracing in the front of the next-to-last bundle and prior to cutting the rear bracing, the last bundle in the rear of the container must be secured to the side of the container. Important: If it is not secured to the container wall when the last bracing is cut, this bundle will be loose and unstable when the next-to-last bundle is removed. Once the forklift secures the final bundle, it can be freed from the container wall.
- The removal of the bracing will be the same throughout the remainder of the container. The difference now is that the bundles need to be pulled toward the rear of the container using a chain, cable, or strap. This dragging process will be very unstable and the unloader should be clear at all times.
- If an attachment designed to handle stone slab bundles and a second forklift are not available, a cable can be used to drag the bundle to the rear of the container, easing it out to the edge. Always keep the cable in a "cradle" tie around the bundle
- Stone yards without loading docks can employ a mobile crane made specifically for this purpose. These machines are designed with a long arm and special extension that can reach deep into the corners of closed-top containers to extract bundles.
- Whatever the method or equipment your company uses, proceed with the utmost caution. When used in tandem with your own company's operating and safety procedures, these guidelines can help safeguard your well-being and protect other workers and customers who visit your facility.

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3. Discussion:

- Review your company's container unloading procedures. Are they sufficient?
- What are some of the hazards associated with unloading containers?

4. RECAP/REVIEW:

- When opening a bundle after transferring it to an A-frame, the cable placement should be directly inside of the wooden uprights. Why?
- How many bundles should be loosened at one time? Why?

5. Reminder:

- Safety is the responsibility of both management and employees!

Next Safety Meeting is scheduled for _____ and the topic will be _____.

Take Exam / Review Results

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