

Hydraulic Excavators: Lifting with Slings

An excavator is used primarily to dig and load. A crane is the preferred method for lifting materials or equipment; however, there may be times when using an excavator is a practical solution to an immediate need. If using the excavator is the practicable solution, good planning will maximize both the safety of the workers involved and the efficiency of the lift.

The lifting, lowering, or moving of workers in the bucket or suspended from the boom or bucket of the excavator is **not permitted**.

Before using an excavator to make a lift, go through these safety checkpoints first:

1. Are the load charts applicable for the excavator and available in the cab?
 2. Is the operator qualified to make the lift? *
 3. Is the rigger qualified to rig the load to be lifted? *
 4. Does the excavator have the rated capacity to lift the load safely?
 5. Is the manufacturer's lifting point or engineered attachment for the purpose of attaching slings rated for the full capacity of the excavator?
6. Will the lift be made from level and stable ground? (*refer to manufacturer's manual*)
 7. Have work procedures been established that will minimize the risk to workers near the boom or bucket?

Never lift, lower, or move a slung load if:

- Lifting or lowering in close proximity to workers when there is the possibility of the worker being struck
- Using open hooks when it may cause a hazard to workers
- Lifting loads without calculating weights or making test lifts (*see operation manual*)
- Travelling with a slung load unless the manufacturer has addressed it
- Performing a single lift with two excavators without first informing all the workers involved and without the supervision of a qualified supervisor *

* Qualified – Knowledgeable of work, hazards and means to control hazards as evidenced by education, training, experience, or a combination of all three.

Note: To comply with the current Occupational Health & Safety Regulation, read Part 15: Rigging and Part 16: Mobile Equipment, which can be downloaded from the WCB Health and Safety Centre at www.worksafebc.com