

Click Bishop

Commissioner

P.O. Box 111149

Juneau, AK 99811-1149

www.labor.alaska.gov



Beth Leschper

Communications Director

907.465.2700

cell: 907.723.1321

beth.leschper@alaska.gov

Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 30, 2008

No. 08-63

For more information: Grey Mitchell, Director of Labor Standards and Safety
907-465-4885, Grey.Mitchell@Alaska.Gov

Alaska Labor Commissioner: Focus on Crane Safety

JUNEAU, Alaska— Serious crane accidents across the country are making news this construction season. The most recent occurred last week when a crane tipped over and crushed a bystander during a steeple mounting ceremony in Oklahoma. In the past few months, accidents in Nevada, New York, Florida and Texas have claimed the lives of workers and bystanders.

“These crane accidents illustrate the importance of crane and jobsite safety. In Alaska we have not had a crane-related fatality for several years and I intend to keep it that way with a proactive safety effort,” Labor Commissioner Click Bishop said. “We ask all employers who use cranes to review crane lifting and safety policies, check cranes for mechanical integrity, and ensure crane operators are qualified and use appropriate safety procedures.”

While there is no state requirement for crane operator certification, Alaska’s Occupational Safety and Health regulations require employers who use cranes to ensure every operator has appropriate training, knowledge and experience, and is physically fit to operate a crane. It is the employer’s responsibility to adequately inspect and maintain the crane and rigging. It is also critical for employers to ensure that employees assisting with the lift are properly trained – including signaling, load limits and rigging techniques – and are aware of the hazards of operating a crane.

“I ask that all employers, safety professionals, crane operators and other concerned Alaskans stand by me and make sure that ‘we all go home safe tonight,’” Commissioner Bishop said.

For help with crane standards in Alaska, employers should contact the Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Consultation and Training Section at 800-656-4972.

###