

## Crane company cited for July 18 accident at Lyondell Bassell

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The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is proposing penalties against Baton Rouge, La.-based Deep South Crane and Rigging following an OSHA investigation into the deaths of four employees when a crane overhauled inside the Lyondell Bassell Refining facility in Houston, just west of the Pasadena city limits.

OSHA issued citations alleging six serious, one repeat and one other-than-serious violations following an investigation that began July 18 when four workers were struck and killed by a mobile crane. The crane overhauled when the boom reached an unsafe angle, causing the crane to collapse backwards onto a lift, killing two employees there, as well as two crane operators.

"Not only was the crane operator inadequately trained but the project superintendent did not ensure the crane did not reach hazardous conditions," said Mark Briggs, OSHA's area director for its Houston South Area Office. "If OSHA's regulations and industry standards had been followed, it is possible this tragedy could have been prevented."

The six serious violations included failing to ensure: load rating charts were secured to the cab; the charts included the limitations and warnings for stability of the crane; the controls were labeled in the cab of the crane; and employees were protected from falling on walking-working surfaces. A serious violation exists when there is a substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result, and the employer knew or should have known of the hazard.

The repeat violation is for failing to provide adequate training and ensure that the crane operator was qualified to operate the crane.

The proposed violations carry \$71,500 in penalties.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director in Houston, or contest the citations and penalties before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Employers and employees with questions about workplace safety may call the agency's Houston South Area Office at 281-286-0583 or its Houston North Area Office at 281-591-2438. They also may visit OSHA's Web site at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

In fiscal year (FY) 2008, OSHA conducted almost 39,000 worksite inspections, surpassing the agency's goal for the year by 2.4 percent. On average, 4,000 more workplace inspections were completed each year (38,515) between FY 2001 and 2008 as compared to the prior administration from FY 1993 to 2000 (34,508).

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace for their employees. OSHA's role is to promote the safety and health of America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual process improvement in workplace safety and health.