



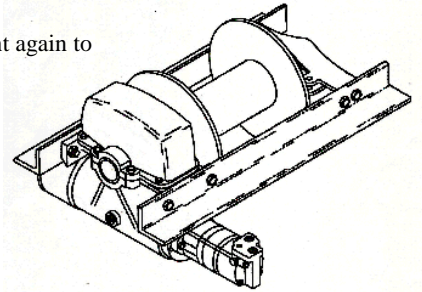
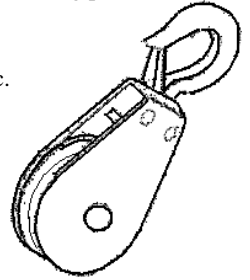
Job Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Site Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Finish Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Foreman/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Topic 335: Winch Safety**

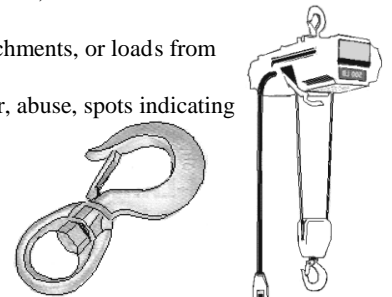
**Introduction:** Winches are very useful pieces of equipment to have on vehicles. Winches may also be used as hoists on the jobsite for lifting loads which would be unmanageable by hand. However, the use of winches poses safety hazards which must be addressed to operate the equipment properly and safely. Following are guidelines for the safe use of winches and equipment:

- **Employers must ensure** that personnel who use winches are properly trained in their safe use, including safe rigging and hoisting procedures.
- **Read and understand** the operator's manual for the type of winch you will be using.
- **Do not exceed** the rated capacity for the winch, cable, rigging, or attachments.
- **Prior to use** ensure that the winch is mounted securely and properly. Check for loose or missing bolts, cracked welds, etc.
- **Never use winches** to lift, hoist, or move personnel. The proper equipment must be provided for use as a manlift.
- **Ensure that** at least five wraps of cable remain on the drum when the winch is operated. Cable anchors on winches are not designed to hold the rated capacity for the winch.
- **Stay clear** of suspended loads and loads or cable under tension from the winch.
- **Never step over** a cable which is under tension.
- **Maintain the winch** and all associated equipment properly according to the manufacturer's recommendation.
- **Winches not equipped** with automatic brakes should not be used to hoist suspended loads.
- **On vehicle mounted winches**, never move the vehicle in conjunction with the winch to pull or wrench loads. This may seriously exceed the rated capacity of the winch, cable, and attaching equipment.
- **When using a winch** to pull a load, place a blanket or mat over the cable 6 – 8 feet from the load before applying tension to the cable. This will reduce the chance of injury or damage from a cable or attachment which fails.
- **Prior to use**, attach the cable hook securely, apply tension to the cable, and check the hook attachment again to ensure it is still properly attached and pulling in a straight line with the cable.
- **When using a vehicle mounted winch**, place the vehicle in neutral with the wheels blocked and the parking brake set before applying tension with the winch.
- **Ensure that** pulley snatch blocks are tightly closed to avoid pinching the cable.
- **Winches operated** from a PTO must have the PTO shaft guarded to prevent contact with personnel.



**Checklist for rope, chain, hoists, and equipment used with winches:**

- Are rigging and hoisting devices inspected before use and as necessary during use to ensure safety?
- Are defective rigging or hoisting devices immediately removed from service?
- Are employees prohibited from tying knots in chains or slings?
- Are employees prohibited from using makeshift hooks, links, or fasteners such as those formed from rods, bolts, or other such devices?
- Are only approved factory-made attachments or fasteners used?
- Do attachments and hoist hooks have a safety latch, safety type hook, or other device to prevent slings, attachments, or loads from inadvertently lifting out of the hook?
- Is fiber rope frequently inspected? Do you prohibit the use of rope that shows visual signs of excessive wear, abuse, spots indicating caustic or acid damage, or other defects that would reduce the rated strength below the safe working load?
- Are people prohibited from passing under suspended loads, or over cables under tension?
- Is a preventive-maintenance program established for all hoists?
- Are all operators trained for the particular hoist being operated?
- Is the rated capacity visibly marked on each crane, hoist, or jack?
- Is sufficient lighting provided for the operator to perform the work safely?



**Conclusion:** Winches are indispensable for freeing stuck vehicles, and lifting heavy loads. However, winches must be operated knowledge safely to prevent accidents. Hazards associated with winches are foreseeable and prevention is easily accomplished by using common sense and training.

### **Work Site Review**

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Personnel Safety Violations: \_\_\_\_\_

**Employee Signatures:**

*(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)*


*These guidelines do not supercede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.*