

RCW 49.17.435 Construction crane safety—Permits—Application—Timelines—Appeals. (1) The department shall establish, by rule, a permit for the performance of any work involving the operation, assembly, disassembly, or reconfiguration of a tower crane, subject to the requirements of subsection (2) of this section.

(2) The tower crane permit established by rule under subsection (1) of this section must include the following provisions, at a minimum:

(a) Require a complete application, subject to the requirements of subsection (5) of this section;

(b) Require a safety conference prior to issuing the permit, subject to the requirements of subsection (6) of this section;

(c) Require the department to issue or deny a permit, subject to the requirements of subsections (7) and (8) of this section;

(d) Allow the department to suspend or revoke a permit, subject to the requirements of subsection (9) of this section;

(e) Require the department to provide written notice of denials, suspensions, or revocation of a permit specifying the reasons for the denial, suspension, or revocation;

(f) Allow appeals of a denial, suspension, or revocation of a permit, subject to the requirements of subsection (10) of this section;

(g) Require advance notification to the department of any assembly, disassembly, or reconfiguration of a tower crane and require confirmation from the department to proceed;

(h) Allow the department to require additional information or updated safety conferences before issuing a confirmation to proceed under (g) of this subsection;

(i) Require the department to inspect permitted activities for the tower crane once assembled, following any reconfiguration, or any other permitted activities; and

(j) Require that if the department identifies deficiencies that directly affect the structural integrity or safe operation of a tower crane, the deficiencies be addressed immediately, and the tower crane not be operated until the deficiencies are corrected.

(3) Beginning January 1, 2026, a prime contractor must obtain a permit from the department, as established under this section, prior to performing or allowing the performance of any work involving the operation, assembly, disassembly, or reconfiguration of a tower crane. An exemption from the permit requirement may be allowed by the department for exceptions as determined by the department.

(4) (a) The prime contractor must possess a permit, as required under subsection (3) of this section, at all times a tower crane is present on a construction worksite.

(b) If the prime contractor's permit is suspended or revoked, the tower crane may not be used in operations, nor can assembly, disassembly, or reconfiguration take place until all deficiencies have been addressed and the permit is reinstated by the department.

(5) The prime contractor must apply for a permit required under subsection (3) of this section in a manner and form prescribed by the department that must include, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) Name of the assembly/disassembly director;

(b) Beginning the later of January 1, 2027, or 12 months after the date an assembly/disassembly director program is approved by a nationally accredited organization recognized by the department, the

application must include a copy of the assembly/disassembly director's national assembly/disassembly director certification; and

(c) Certification from the prime contractor that all assembly, disassembly, and reconfigurations will be performed with a technical representative of the distributor or manufacturer present to assure that such processes and operations are performed in accordance with manufacturer operation instructions and guidelines. The technical representative must be knowledgeable of assembly, disassembly, and reconfiguration procedures.

(6)(a) Prior to issuing a permit as required under subsection (3) of this section, the department must complete a safety permit conference, which may be conducted using remote videoconference technology, to ensure all parties involved with the assembly, disassembly, and reconfiguration of the tower crane are aware of the requirements and responsibilities under the permit, including manufacturer operation instructions and guidelines, and recommended best practices. The department must establish the information and materials required to be submitted prior to the safety conference, the information and material required to be reviewed at the safety conference, and the required attendees at the safety conference.

(b) During the safety conference, at a minimum the following items must be evaluated:

(i) The potential risks of the procedures, including those addressed in the crane operating manual, as well as specific measures to be taken by the permit applicant and all entities required in the operation, assembly, disassembly, and reconfiguration of the tower crane to minimize these risks;

(ii) The written accident prevention programs of the permit applicant and all entities involved in the operation, assembly, disassembly, and reconfiguration of the tower crane;

(iii) The permit applicant's written job plan as required under RCW 49.17.440; and

(iv) For each employee directly involved with the permitted work, a review of their experience and qualifications, including a copy of the crane operator's license.

(7) The department shall issue a permit under this section within five working days of the initial project permit safety conference under subsection (6) of this section, if the application materials are complete and the materials presented by the prime contractor at the safety conference are complete. If the application or safety conference materials are not complete, the prime contractor must be given a written list, before leaving the safety conference, of the materials or information outstanding. The department shall then either issue the permit within five working days of receiving the outstanding materials or deny the permit in writing pursuant to the requirements under this chapter and rules established by the department. The department may issue conditional permits, including when specific information is not yet available.

(8) The department must deny a permit if the permit applicant has a record of safety and health violations which indicates that the permit applicant may not be maintaining a safe worksite or operation.

(9) The department must suspend or revoke a permit if the permit holder:

(a) Has failed to comply with applicable occupational health and safety standards or regulations involving tower cranes;

(b) Fails to notify the department in advance of the assembly, disassembly, or reconfiguration of a fixed tower crane as required under this section;

(c) Fails to ensure that a technical representative of the distributor or manufacturer of the tower crane who is knowledgeable of assembly, disassembly, and reconfiguration procedures was present during assembly, disassembly, or reconfiguration;

(d) Fails to immediately correct deficiencies directly affecting the structural integrity of a tower crane;

(e) Fails to correct deficiencies directly affecting the safe operation of a tower crane; or

(f) Has refused the department entry to a worksite that contains activity for which a permit is required.

(10)(a) A denial, suspension, or revocation of a permit may be appealed to department within 15 working days after the denial, suspension, or revocation order is communicated.

(b) The department shall hold a hearing at such place designated by the director or authorized representative for the convenience of the attending parties within 2 working days of the applicant's or suspended or revoked permit holder's appeal.

(c) The applicant or suspended or revoked permit holder has the burden of establishing that it qualifies for a permit.

(d) The director or authorized representative shall preside at the hearing, which must be open to employees or employees' representatives.

(e) The applicant or permit holder shall notify the employees or employees' representatives of such hearing a reasonable time prior to the hearing, but in no case later than 24 hours prior to the hearing. Proof of such notification by the applicant or permit holder must be made at the hearing.

(f) The director or authorized representative shall issue a decision within 10 business days of the hearing. The director's or authorized representative's decision may affirm the order, reverse the order, or reverse the order with conditions to mitigate any deficiencies.

(g) The director's or authorized representative's decision is subject to appeal to the board of industrial insurance appeal under RCW 49.17.140. [2024 c 311 s 4.]

Finding—2024 c 311: "The legislature finds that there is significant opportunity to improve worker and public safety in tower crane assembly, disassembly, and reconfiguration. The Seattle tower crane incident on April 27, 2019, killing two members of the public, Sarah Pantip Wong and Alan Jay Justad, and two iron workers, Travis Daniel Corbet and Andrew W. Yoder, exposed weaknesses in construction safety efforts. Requirements for permitting, street closures, and penalties are created to ensure that assembly, disassembly, and reconfiguration of tower cranes proceed safely." [2024 c 311 s 1.]

Application—2024 c 311: "The provisions of this act do not apply to cranes used on marine vessels and at ports, terminals, and marine facilities for maritime activities regulated by the department." [2024 c 311 s 9.]

Application—Effective date—2024 c 311: See notes following RCW 49.17.400.