

April 28, 2003

John Prendergast, Safety Manager
Hamilton Construction Company
P.O. Box 659
Springfield, Oregon 97477-0121

Dear Mr. Prendergast:

This letter is in response to your recent request for a variance to allow the use of sorting hooks when setting stringers for temporary bridges. Your letter states that you have tested the proposed procedure and it was successful. By using sorting hooks, with tag lines, fall hazards are reduced during attachment and removal of rigging, and security and control of the load is increased during handling.

Since OR-OSHA does not have any rules prohibiting the use of sorting hooks to set stringers, a variance is not needed to allow you to proceed as proposed. To ensure that the procedure continues to be safe, the following practices need to be followed:

- (1) Do not allow anyone beneath the load;
- (2) Secure all shackles pins;
- (3) Use only beams with structural integrity to prevent deformation when lifted by the sorting hooks attached to opposite ends (as proposed); and
- (4) Use tag lines to control the load.

Should you have further questions, please contact either Mike Mitchell or Mike Lulay at (503) 378-3272. You are also invited to see the OR-OSHA pages on the Internet at the above address.

Sincerely,

Marilyn K. Schuster, Manager
Standards & Technical Resources
Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division