Toolbox talk - Preventing Falling Loads

One of the most important things you can do to help prevent a falling load is to properly determine the load's center of gravity. The center of gravity is the point within the load at which it balances evenly in all directions.

- While rigging a load, determine its center of gravity so that it will remain stable throughout the lift.

- The safest way to lift a load is straight up, directly above the center of gravity.

- When rigging objects that are uniform in shape and size such as a large piece of pipe, determine the center of gravity by measuring the object. The precise middle of the object will be its center of gravity.

- When rigging objects that are not uniform in shape and size, use your best judgment regarding the center of gravity.

- Complete the rigging and signal the operator to lift the load slowly and carefully a few inches at a time, stopping and starting so that you can determine whether the rigging needs adjustment.

- If the load tilts, have the operator lower the load. Adjust the rigging and repeat the process.

- Continue to use this trial-and-error method until the center of gravity is established. Determining the center of gravity for each load will significantly reduce the chances of losing a load during lifting operations.