

CERTIFICATION NEWS



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Graham Brent, Executive Director

National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators

2750 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 505, Fairfax, VA 22031

gbrent@nccco.org

www.nccco.org

(703) 560-2391 ext. 205

NCCCO Launches Digger Derrick Operator Certification Program

Fairfax, VA, August 1, 2012—The [National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators \(NCCCO\)](http://www.nccco.org) announced today the availability of a new [CCO certification program for digger derrick operators](#). Digger derricks are multi-purpose machines primarily designed to dig holes, set poles, and position materials and apparatus.

Due to digger derricks' unique configuration and versatility, users and manufacturers requested that NCCCO create specific operator tests for this specialized equipment. This latest addition to CCO's range of operator certification programs represents the first program NCCCO has developed specifically for the utility industry.

Although digger derrick operators are excluded from OSHA's operator certification requirements for utility work under 29 CFR 1926 Subpart CC (Cranes and Derricks in Construction), digger derrick operators are required to be certified for work such as erecting signs, lights, and telecommunication lines, as well as other construction work.

Co-chaired by safety experts from the two major digger derrick manufacturers—Altec and Terex Utilities—a task force of 20 subject matter experts representing end users, utility companies, trainers, and contractors developed the new program over the past 14 months. During that time NCCCO facilitated six in-person task force meetings as well as numerous virtual meetings to determine the most appropriate contents for the written and practical exams that candidates must pass to earn certification.

In addition to hosting task force meetings, Terex Utilities and Altec donated trucks and materials for program development; Crane Tech, Georgia Power, and the Southeast

Lineman Training Center also hosted task force meetings. Psychometric consultants from International Assessment Institute (IAI), the testing services company that has provided exam development and administration services to NCCCO since 1999, also played a key role in guiding the program development to make sure that the tests are fair, valid, reliable, and legally defensible.

The resulting CCO digger derrick operator written exam tests candidates' knowledge of applicable standards, safe operating procedures, and load chart usage, while the practical exam includes tasks to demonstrate operators' ability to control a load, dig a hole, and place a pole.

"The request for this new program reflects a general trend among employers from many different industries seeking a means of ensuring operators are qualified to operate equipment safely," said Joel Oliva, NCCCO Program Manager for Test Development. "It's particularly noteworthy in this instance given the absence of a federal requirement for the utility industry."

It's a position supported from within the industry. "Regardless of the regulatory requirements, we see the same safety benefits accruing for our digger derrick operators as CCO certification has provided for our crane operators over the years," said Wilson Yancey, Vice President of Safety at Quanta Services, a leading provider of specialized contracting services for the electric power, natural gas and pipeline, and telecommunication industries.

The new digger derrick operator written exam may be taken at any CCO written exam administration. As with other CCO operator certification programs, practical exam sites must meet specific requirements and be approved in advance by NCCCO. Details about the exam contents and how to apply for and/or host exams can be found on NCCCO's website at <http://www.nccco.org/certification/diggerderrick.html>.

* * * * *

The **National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO)** is an independent, non-profit organization established in 1995 by industry to develop and administer a nationwide program for the certification of crane operators and related personnel. Since then, NCCCO has administered over 625,000 nationally accredited written and practical examinations to more than 170,000 operators in all 50 states.