

Please take note of our new website address... [www.SanDiego6.com](http://www.SanDiego6.com)

## **New York Accident Draws Attention to Local Crane Safety**

Reported by: Jeff Powers

Last Update: 5/31 1:31 am

After two fatal tower crane accidents in New York City in two months, could a similar accident happen here? We posed that question to construction experts in San Diego.

Construction accidents have and will continue to happen in southern California.

"When something happens, it happens big," says Scott Rhodes, a Superintendent with Brewer Crane.

The largest crane company downtown, Brewer has been handling the Hilton Hotel. His team was not affiliated with the recent gas explosion.

"Something catastrophic could have happened, yes. Did it happen? No," said Rhodes.

He also says that's because California is unique. After a deadly crane accident in San Francisco in 1989, the state changed their laws.

Rhodes told us that, "The state of California at that time took their OSHA branch and created a new team, a new division specializing in tower cranes, tower crane safety."

In California, three sets of eyes inspect every nut and bolt of tower cranes as much as three times a year. One of those inspectors is Ken Pierson who has been with Cal-OSHA since 1972.

"You can't make mistakes. Mistakes are costly," says Pierson.

Pierson says the mistakes that happened in New York were likely operator error. Too much weight towards the end of the crane and the whole turn table just snapped off.

He says operators in San Diego are too skilled and too monitored for that to happen here.

"The operators in San Diego do that -- and if their crane doesn't feel right -- they can shut down the job," says Pierson.



