**[Removing and Destroying Rigging Gear from Service](http://www.cranetech.com/blog/removing-and-destroying-rigging-gear-from-service/%22%20%5Co%20%22Permanent%20Link%3A%20Removing%20and%20Destroying%20Rigging%20Gear%20from%20Service)**

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You have a [rigging inspector training session](http://www.cranetech.com/crane-rigging-training/rigging-gear-sling-inspector-onsite/) so that your team has the knowledge, principles, basics, to inspect your rigging gear. During the hands-on session low and behold several, perhaps even dozens of slings and shackles get tagged as damaged and set aside. All the employees sign the attendance sheet and go back to work with a refreshed heightened awareness of how to protect, handle and inspect rigging gear.



But what happens to the gear that is “tagged and should be removed” from service? Is it just thrown in the dumpster in hopes that it never sees the light of day again? Is it put into someone’s truck so they can use it for little stuff at home? Is it left in a bin for someone else to handle?  Hopefully none of these answers are true at your site. It is going to take some extra effort to keep damaged gear from finding its way out of the discard pile and potentially being used again. You must not only make sure there is a plan for what needs to happen when rigging gear is removed from service, but identify and empower your employees who can make the tough call on destroying company property.

Before we go any further, lets just say it… you should not remove gear from service without the expectation that it needs to be replaced.  Have spare gear on hand so that when slings and hardware are marked for destruction, they don’t have to be used again. Instead they can simply be replaced without having to wait for new stock to arrive. But then what?

If you are close enough to a reputable rigging shop, one of the easiest methods to rid yourself of the liability of a sling getting placed back into service is to bring it to the shop and let them either test it, repair it, or destroy it—you can also use this time to validate that the rigging is indeed right for your specific application and/or modify the rigging you are using if needed and place the order for the spare rigging to have on hand the next time it needs to be replaced. If returning the gear to the shop isn’t feasible or worth it, then it needs to be destroyed.

In the case of synthetic round or web slings, it is very easy to cut the sling and/or the sling eye and throw them away. This essentially guarantees it’s not going back into service. However wire slings, chain, rigging hardware and hooks can be a little more challenging and time consuming to destroy.  But the challenge is what is the best way to destroy it? Here are a couple of suggestions:

* Grab your chop saw or welding torch and cut the item in a systematic fashion so it can’t be used again.
* Place the gear into a small container, get some concrete and pour it on top or weld a lid on the container so that items cannot be removed.

Believe it or not, the usefulness doesn’t have to end when the gear has been destroyed. It can still serve a safe purpose.  Some ideas include:

* Collecting the scrap and using it as material for a test weight (this is especially good when the concrete suggestion is followed above)
* Take it to the scrap yard for recycling
* Save it for the training department for display them on their “wall of shame” along with a story about what went wrong, and what corrective actions were taken.
* In the case of synthetic web slings, sections may be used as softeners to prevent damage to the newer slings

If the gear cannot immediately be destroyed, some companies simply have a scrap bin for disposal of such items. But even then you run the risk of the hardware or hook being returned to active use if it is easily retrievable. We suggest that a scrap bin or locker be secured to ensure unauthorized personnel do not return the rigging gear to service or take it for personal use.  Then when the bin is full or when it is warranted, the gear is taken out of the bin and destroyed.

However you decide to handle destruction of defunct rigging gear, make sure that you comply with all laws. Some state regulations may require a sling to be cut up or destroyed to ensure that it doesn’t find its way back into service. After all, allowing rejected rigging gear to wind up at someone’s home or even back on the job site could be a very costly mistake, either in terms of life or legal action, and it’s not worth the risk.

We’d love to hear the good bad and ugly of your stories on disposing rigging gear. Leave us a comment below or email us. We also offer [Rigging Inspector](http://www.cranetech.com/crane-rigging-training/rigging-gear-sling-inspector/)courses at your location or ours, click to find out more.

Have a safe day!