



Toolbox Talks

Aerial Lift Safety Part 1

There are several types of aerial lifts (JLG, Snorkel, scissor lifts, articulating boom platforms, etc.) used in the workplace. Today we're going to review some safety tips for those working in & around this equipment.

- As with other powered vehicles, inspect the lift prior to utilizing it. Walk around & ensure there are no leaks, check to ensure that all the controls are functioning correctly.
- Never walk under the boom to gain access to the platform.
- Only utilize the lift on level ground.
- Only stand on the platform floor. Never stand or sit on the railing.
- Always look in the direction the machine is moving.
- Do not rest the boom or basket on a steel structure of any kind.
- Wear safety harnesses & tie-off to the manufacture provided anchorage point within the platform at all times when you're in the basket. This includes when you are lowered & moving the equipment to another location.
- Keep your hands on the external portion of the basket when raising or lowering the basket.
- Ensure that a fire extinguisher is mounted in the basket when performing activities that present a fire hazard, such as welding or grinding. Ensure you have a fire watch person below.

Except in a case of an emergency, ground controls shall not be operated on an occupied lift (lift occupant shall be in full control of the lift at all times).

True Story: Aerial Lift Fatality

On a winter day in 2008, a male roofer died after falling 10 feet from a telescopic boom lift. He & four other roofing crew members were installing a new roof at a residence undergoing restoration.

Using a telescopic aerial lift, the roofer, who was not wearing a personal fall arrest system & not tied off, started to ascent in the telescopic lift with the red rosin paper. It is unclear if the access gate to the bucket of the telescopic boom lift was open or closed. When he reached a height of approximately 10 feet, he fell out of the telescopic boom lift platform to the ground.

One of the roofers in the truck heard a noise, looked over toward the house & saw the man on the ground. His head was lying on a lower brace of the scaffolding & his back was on a tree stump.

Emergency medical services were immediately contacted. Upon their arrival, an ambulance transported the roofer to the nearest hospital. From there he was transferred to the nearest trauma hospital where he died from his injuries at 3:41 PM.

This roofer was only 10 ft off the ground! Although there were no direct witnesses to what happened, two lessons can be learned from this tragic incident.

- 1. When in the basket of an aerial lift, always utilize a body harness & lanyard to tie off to the basket.*
- 2. After entering the basket of an aerial lift, always ensure the entrance gate is shut & latched secure.*



Toolbox Talks

Aerial Lift Safety Part 2

HAZARD ALERT

Student Worker Killed While Filming Football Practice from a Scissor Lift



The scissor lift shown above is an example & is included for illustrative purposes only. It is not the specific lift involved in the incident described in this Hazard Alert.
All information found on OSHA.gov

Incident

During the Fall 2010 college football season, a student, who was also an employee of the University of Notre Dame, was killed while filming the school's football team practice from a scissor lift. A scissor lift is a portable, hydraulic-powered lift with a platform that can be raised into the air directly above the base. Reportedly, the worker, who had not been trained to properly operate the scissor lift, raised the lift over 39 feet into the air to film the practice. The wind gusts that day were more than 50 miles per hour. The high winds blew the lift over, killing the worker.

Hazards

Organizations that have workers, including students who are employees, who use scissor lifts to film events & functions must address the hazards associated with this equipment. These hazards can include:

- The lift falling over or a worker slipping off the platform if the lift is:
 - used during bad weather or high winds
 - positioned on soft or uneven ground, or on weak utility covers (e.g., underground sprinkler valve boxes)
 - overloaded with heavy objects
 - used with guardrails removed
 - driven over uneven, unstable ground, or surface in poor condition, with the lift in an elevated position, or
 - used with brakes that are not properly set
- A worker being electrocuted if the lift makes contact with electrical lines.

How to Reduce Hazard

- Establish & follow safe work practices that include, but are not limited to:
 - Inspecting controls & components before use
 - Selecting work locations with firm & level surfaces away from hazards that can cause the lift to be unstable (e.g., drop-offs or holes, slopes, bumps or ground obstructions, or debris)
 - Selecting work locations that are clear of electrical power sources (e.g., power lines, transformers) – by at least 10 feet – & other overhead hazards (e.g., other utilities, branches, overhangs, etc.)
 - Operating lifts only during weather conditions that are safe for use (e.g., not in high winds, rain, snow, sleet, etc.)
 - Moving the lift to/from a work location safely, with the lift lowered, unless following safe practices allowed by the manufacturer
 - Setting the breaks & stabilizing the lift before raising it
 - Ensuring that the lift is not overloaded
 - Working safely from the lift (e.g., do not remove guardrails or stand on them for extra height)
 - Reporting problems & malfunctions
- Train workers on, & make sure workers follow, established safe work practices & manufacturers' recommendations for operating scissor lifts safely
- Allow only trained workers to use scissor lifts, & make sure those workers show they can use a scissor lift properly
- Make sure that the scissor lift has a guardrail system that protects workers from falling, &
- Test, inspect, & maintain scissor lifts according to the manufacturer's recommendations.