



Weekly Safety Meeting

Your Safety Is Our Business®

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Working Safely with Aerial Lifts

Jobsites are not always at ground level. Sometimes, workers need to use aerial platforms. All work has hazards and risks involved in it, but when you work at an elevated height, extra training and attention to safety procedures is a necessity.

Man-lifts and scissor lifts are two pieces of equipment that many workers can't imagine working without. This equipment, if used correctly, provides quick and safe access to work areas that at one time could only be reached from scaffolding or a crane's man-basket. These lifts, collectively called "Aerial Work Platforms," are important tools. But as with any tool, there are right and wrong ways to use them.

The most important tip to remember before operating any aerial lift platform, is **always read and follow the manufacturer's safety and operation manual!** This information must be kept on the rig and can usually be found somewhere on the lift.

In order to work safely with aerial platforms, get training on the operating procedures for your job site and task. **Get specialized training on each aerial lift model you will use.** Know the risks and hazards involved with aerial work, including your own risk of falling and the hazard of dropping objects on to co-workers below.

When you are planning your work, first ensure that the platform is appropriate to the task. Make sure that loads are within the capacity limit and are stowed properly for stability. Always use the outriggers and stabilizers required for the aerial platform and check for uneven surfaces and debris in the work area. Look for overhead obstructions and electrical lines. Avoid using aerial platforms outside in bad weather and high winds. Don't use an aerial platform if it has to be stabilized against another building or object. Never use your aerial platform as a crane.

Make sure that guardrails are installed and access gates are closed before you raise the platform. Keep both feet on the platform at all times and do not reach too far out. Do not use lumber or ladders to get additional height on the platform. Do not step on guardrails or gate rungs and do not climb out of the platform for any reason. If you will travel with the aerial platform, go slowly in order to watch for overhead hazards and people down below.

Safe Operating Procedures for Both Man-lifts and Scissor Lifts:

- Only trained and authorized people should operate the lift. A qualified instructor must make sure that every operator reads and/or understands the equipment's safety and operating instructions. This includes all of the warning decals and labels mounted on the machine.
- Always check for overhead obstructions before driving or elevating the platform.
- Refuel tanks only when the unit is turned off. If battery powered, the batteries should be charged only in a well-ventilated area away from any open flame.
- Prior to each shift a safety inspection should be completed by the operator; this includes both a visual inspection and a function test. If a problem is found, get the lift repaired.



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- Elevate the platform only when it is on a firm, level surface. Although many lifts look like a rough terrain pieces of equipment, they are not. Their large tires do allow the equipment to access somewhat difficult areas, but once in position they are designed to be out of level only 5° while in operation. This amounts to 10 inches in a 10-foot wheel span. In addition, the lift must have a tilt alarm that activates when the machine is more than 5° out of level.

Scissor lifts provide a solid surface to work from, but always remember:

- Guardrail, mid-rails, and toe-boards must be in place. The toe board can be omitted at the door.
- The platform must be equipped with a mechanical parking brake that will hold the unit securely on any slope it is capable of climbing. The brake should be tested periodically.
- Never use the lift's rails, planks across the rails, or a ladder, to gain additional height.

Man-lifts - it's important to remember the following:

- Whenever working out of a man-lift, a full body harness must be worn and properly attached to the basket. A sudden jolt has thrown people from man-lifts before they could react.
- Always maintain a safe distance from debris piles, drop-offs, floor openings, etc.
- Never drive the man-lift when it is elevated above the limit the manufacturer considers safe. Each piece of equipment will state what the maximum extension can be while being driven.

Safe Work Practices:

- Make sure that workers who operate aerial lifts are properly trained in the safe use of the equipment.
- Maintain and operate elevating work platforms according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Never override hydraulic, mechanical, or electrical safety devices.
- Never move the equipment with workers in an elevated platform unless this is permitted by the manufacturer.
- Maintain a minimum clearance of at least 10 feet away from the nearest energized overhead lines.
- Always treat power lines, wires, and other conductors as energized, even if they are down or appear to be insulated.
- Use a body harness or restraining belt with a lanyard attached to the boom or basket to prevent the worker(s) from being ejected or pulled from the basket.
- Set the brakes and use wheel chocks when on an incline.
- Use outriggers, if provided.
- Do not exceed the load limits of the equipment. Allow for the combined weight of the worker, tools, and materials.

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Summary:

Used correctly, aerial work platforms can be priceless, timesaving assets. Operate them without regard to their limitations and this same equipment will put you, and those around you, at undue risk.

When you gamble with safety, you bet your life!!



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Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests

