



# Weekly Safety Meeting

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## Aerial Lift Safety

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 safely.

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 in a PVC tube that's tied to the machine's frame or rails.

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 coworkers below.

### The Risks:

Most common causes of death involve electrocutions, falls and aerial lift tip-overs. Other causes of injury include being caught between the lift bucket/guardrail and an object in the work environment like a steel beam, joist or wall. Being struck by falling objects is another common hazard for people working near an aerial lift operation.

Other overhead hazards include power lines, support structures, walls, roofs and ceilings. Environmental factors such as wind, lightning and confined space compound the risk of hazards.

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

- Set outriggers, brakes, and wheel chocks – even if you're working on a level slope;
- If working near traffic, set up work-zone warnings, like cones and signs;
- Close lift platform chains or doors;
- Stand on the floor of the bucket or lift platform. Do not climb on or lean over guardrails;
- NEVER exceed manufacturer's load-capacity limits. Always allow for the combined weight of the worker(s), tools and materials; and
- NEVER override hydraulic, mechanical or electrical safety devices. NEVER use planks, boxes or other items inside the basket to extend their reach.

## Scissor Lifts are Efficient One-direction Lifts; Remember:

- Guardrail, mid-rails, and toeboards 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; and
- Never use the lift's rails, planks across the rails, or a ladder, to gain additional height.

## Unique Hazards for Man-lifts:

Man-lifts can move in more than a single direction, increasing the risk of mishaps. So 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.

Working with and around aerial lift devices always presents some risks. It takes everyone working together to minimize hazards and create a safer work environment.

Follow all safety policies and procedures, and if you are ever unsure about how to safely operate or work around an aerial lift device, see your supervisor immediately.

## Remember:

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.

***IT'S BETTER TO CORRECT AN UNSAFE FRIEND THAN TO BURY ONE!!***

