



# TAILGATE SAFETY

## AERIAL WORK PLATFORMS

Manlifts and scissor lifts are two pieces of equipment that if used correctly provide quick and safe access to work areas that at one time could only be reached from scaffolding or a crane's manbasket. These lifts, collectively called Aerial Work Platforms, are important tools. As with any tool, there are right and wrong ways to use them.

2 to 3% of construction worker deaths can be attributed to aerial lift useage. On aerial lifts, the major causes are falls, electrocutions, and collapses or tipovers.

Important tip to remember - before operating any aerial lift platform, always read and follow the manufacturer's safety and operation manual! This information must be kept on the rig, so if you are renting the equipment, make sure the safety and operation manual is with it.

### **Safe Operating Procedures for Both Manlifts (boomlifts) and Scissor Lifts:**

- Only trained and authorized people operate the lift. A qualified instructor must make sure that every operator reads and/or understands the equipment's safety and operating instructions.
- Always check for overhead obstructions before driving or elevating the platform (including overhead electrical lines).
- 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. This is especially true for rented equipment—it is your responsibility to make sure the equipment is in good repair.
- Elevate the platform only when it is on a firm, level surface. Although many lifts look like a rough terrain piece 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.
- Set brakes and outriggers (if available).
- Do not exceed weight or load limits.

Scissor lifts are efficient one-direction lifts. They provide a solid surface to work from, but always remember:

- Guardrail, midrails and toeboards must be in place. The toeboard 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.
- Fall protection is not required as long as the guardrails are 39" or greater in height.

Unique hazards for manlifts (boomlifts): Manlifts 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 manlift, a full body harness must be worn, and properly attached to the basket.
- Always maintain a safe distance from debris piles, drop-offs, floor openings, etc.
- Never drive the manlift when it is elevated above the limit the manufacturer considers safe.

For the regulations that cover elevating work platforms and aerial devices reference General Industry Safety Orders Sections 3636-3648.

**Training Tips:** a) If available, have an aerial lift available to use during discussion; b) Discuss specific fall protection requirements; c) Ask people for real life examples of dangerous situations for aerial lifts; d) Cover hazards for your specific jobsite.



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