

HAZARD ALERT

CPWR
THE CENTER FOR CONSTRUCTION
RESEARCH AND TRAINING

AERIAL LIFTS



How hard can it be?

Aerial lifts look simple to use.

You can move yourself and your tools exactly to the spot where you need to work, even if it's more than 100' in the air.

If used properly, an aerial lift can help you reduce the risks for back, neck and shoulder injuries caused by working at or above shoulder level.

But all lifts are different. The down lever on one can be the up lever on another model.



PHOTO: KANSAS CITY STAR, 2009

A problem can be catastrophic

Power lines, uneven ground and lack of training can make for gruesome headlines.

Workers are sometime caught between the lift and an object like a steel joist. They are also thrown out of the bucket or man basket if the lift is struck by a large vehicle.

Major causes of death are...

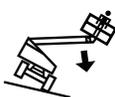
- Electrocution



- Falls



- Tipovers



About 26 construction workers die each year from using aerial lifts.*

*Michael McCann, Deaths from Aerial Lifts in Construction. CPWR, 2001.

Find out more about construction hazards.

Get more of these Hazard Alert cards – and cards on other topics.

Call 301-578-8500

Before you use the lift ...



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUNBELT RENTALS

1 Get training

Your employer must make sure every lift operator is trained by a qualified person experienced with the model of aerial lift being used. Once trained, follow the manufacturers' rules.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MILLER® FALL PROTECTION

2 Wear a full body harness

If your lift is struck by another vehicle, you can be thrown from the lift and killed. Using proper fall protection will keep you from a serious or fatal fall. You must use a suitable lanyard attached to an engineered anchor in the basket or on the boom, not a guardrail.



3 Check for overhead power lines

The most frequent cause of death to a worker in a lift is electrocution. Trees can hide power lines. Do a **pre-job walk-thru to look for obstructions**. Unless you are a qualified electrical worker, **stay a minimum of 10' away from all power lines**.

A world of bad ideas ...

Getting the job done quickly is no reason to take deadly short cuts. Stay away from these "quick fixes" to a problem:

- Standing on guardrail
- Overloading man lift
- Placing a ladder or scaffold on lift
- Climbing out of the basket

Instead, follow these procedures:

- Inspect the lift safety devices before using.
- Make sure the base unit controls are working properly so that someone on the ground can lower the lift if the operator is unable to work the controls.
- Don't modify the lift without the manufacturer's permission.
- Know the Safe Floor Load Capacity before driving onto the floor/slab.

If you think you are in danger:

**Contact your supervisor.
Contact your union.**

**Call OSHA
1-800-321-OSHA**