Aerial lift toolbox talk: boom lifts and bucket trucks

29 CFR 1926.453, 1926.416, 1926.100, 1910.67, 1910.333

Date _____ Trainer _____ Location _____

Opening question

Before you last went up in a lift, did you test the controls and look up for power lines?

Why it matters

Aerial lifts put you high above the ground in a small basket. A fall, a tip-over, contact with a power line or getting crushed against a beam can happen fast. Much of your protection comes from the checks and habits you use before the basket leaves the ground.

Key points

1 Inspect the lift and test the controls

Walk around the lift before you use it and look for leaks, damaged parts, bad tires, and missing guardrails or gates. Lift controls must be tested each day before use to make sure they are in safe working condition (29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(i)). If something is wrong, do not use the lift; tag it out of service and report it.

29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(i)

2 Only trained, authorized operators

In construction, only authorized persons may operate an aerial lift (29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(ii)). In general industry, only trained persons may operate one (29 CFR 1910.67(c)(2)(ii)). Learn the controls on the exact model you will use, including the lower controls, which can override the upper ones. Lower controls must not be operated without permission from the worker in the lift, except in an emergency (29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(ix)).

29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(ii)

3 Stand on the floor and stay tied off

Stand firmly on the floor of the basket. Do not sit or climb on the edge, and never use planks or ladders to reach higher (29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(iv)). Attach your lanyard to the boom or basket as the rules require, never to a nearby pole, structure or other equipment (29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(iii) and (b)(2)(v)).

29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(iv)

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4 Prevent tip-overs

Never exceed the boom and basket load limits set by the manufacturer, and count people, tools and materials (29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(vi)). Set the brakes, put outriggers on pads or a solid surface, and chock the wheels on an incline when that can be done safely (29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(vii)). Do not move a lift truck with the boom raised in a working position and workers in the basket unless it is specifically designed for that (29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(viii)). Watch for holes, soft ground, slopes and drop-offs, and follow the manufacturer's wind limits.

29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(vi)

5 Look up for power lines

Check for overhead lines before you raise the boom, and keep the lift and anything you hold well away from them. In construction, the employer must find out whether the work could bring anyone or anything into contact with an energized power circuit, post warning signs where one exists, and tell you where the lines are, the hazards and the protective measures (29 CFR 1926.416(a)(3)). In general industry, equipment raised near energized overhead lines must keep a clearance of 10 feet, more for voltages over 50kV, unless an exception in the rule applies (29 CFR 1910.333(c)(3)(iii)(A)).

29 CFR 1926.416(a)(3)

6 Protect the people below

Keep tools and materials secured in the basket so nothing falls. Barricade the area under the lift so nobody walks beneath you. Workers in areas where there is a possible danger of head injury from falling objects must be protected by protective helmets (29 CFR 1926.100(a)). Up top, watch for beams and ceilings so you are not crushed between the basket and an overhead object.

29 CFR 1926.100(a)

Scenario

Picture this: A crew is hanging a sign from a bucket truck in a parking lot. The lot slopes a little, the outriggers sit on loose gravel instead of pads, and the basket holds two workers, the sign and a pile of tools. To reach the top bracket, one worker steps up onto the edge of the basket. Nobody checked for overhead lines, and one runs right past the light pole. What should they have done differently?

Crew discussion

1. Which aerial lifts do we use, and who is authorized to operate each one?
2. What do you check on a lift before you go up?
3. Where are the power lines and other overhead hazards on this job?
4. How would we get a worker down if the lift stopped working while they were up?

Bottom line **Test the controls, stay on the floor and tied off, respect the load limit and look up before the boom goes up.**

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Sign-in sheet / Hoja de asistencia

Topic / Tema Aerial lift safety / Seguridad con plataformas elevadoras

Date / Fecha _____

Trainer / Instructor _____ Location / Lugar _____ Company / Empresa _____

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