

MIOSHA Fact Sheet



Using Aerial Lifts

The major causes of injuries and fatalities involving aerial lifts are falls, electrocutions, and collapses or tip-overs. Aerial devices include boom-supported aerial platforms, such as cherry pickers or bucket trucks, aerial ladders and vertical towers, and scissor lifts. Safe work practices for aerial lifts include:

- Ensure that workers who operate aerial lifts are properly trained and tested in the safe use of the equipment and issued a permit. Perform the required inspection of the equipment prior to use and repair any damage or defects affecting the safe operation before use. De-energize and lockout/tagout aerial lifts before performing any maintenance or repairs. Conduct a job site or workplace survey of the area it will be operated in.
- Maintain and operate aerial lifts according to the manufacturer's instructions and keep a copy with the lift. Always stand firmly on the basket floor. Do not sit or climb on the edge or rails of the basket. Never use planks, boxes, or other items inside the basket to extend your reach. Do not exceed the load limits of the equipment. Allow for the combined weight of the worker(s), tools, and materials. Platform gates shall be closed while in the elevated position. Do not alter, modify, or disable safety devices or interlocks.
- Ensure that all wheels of an elevated lift are on a solid base or within the slope limits allowed by the manufacturer. Outriggers or stabilizers, when provided, shall be positioned on pads or a solid surface. Vehicle mounted aerial work platforms shall have brakes set and wheels chocked when on an incline.

Working near Power Lines

Maintain a clearance of 10-15 feet away, depending on the voltage, from the nearest overhead line; this includes any conductive objects such as tools or other equipment. Always treat overhead lines as energized, even if they are down or appear to be insulated. Only qualified power line and communications workers and qualified line-clearance tree trimmers may work closer than 10 feet. Never lose awareness of the overhead hazard.

Traffic or Caught-in Hazards

Establish and clearly mark a danger zone around the aerial lift. When subject to traffic, follow the requirements in Part 6 of the [Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) and Construction Standard [Part 22, Signals, Signs, Tags and Barricades](#). Never move the equipment with workers in the elevated platform unless the equipment has been specifically designed for that operation. When positioning, be aware of fixed overhead hazards, such as structural members to prevent being caught between the structure and the aerial lift.

Fall Protection

Provide the proper type of fall protection based on the type of aerial lift being used and the working conditions. Do not allow workers to belt off to an adjacent pole, structure or equipment while working from an aerial lift.

More information is available from the MIOSHA Consultation Education and Training Division at (517) 284-7720 or online at www.michigan.gov/cet.

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