

TOOLBOX TALK: AERIAL LIFTS AND SCISSOR LIFTS

Job or site _____

Date _____

Led by _____

Open with this

Whoever is running the lift today, you are up first. Walk us through your pre start check, out loud, before you get in it.

The talk

There are two machines here and two different rules, which is where people get caught. In a boom lift, a bucket truck or anything that articulates, you wear a full body harness with a lanyard attached to the boom or the basket. In a scissor lift, the guardrails are the fall protection, so you stay inside them and you keep the chains or gates closed.

Never tie off to the structure you are working on from inside a boom lift. If the boom moves and you are anchored to a beam, the basket goes and you do not. That rule exists because it has happened.

The ground decides whether the machine stays up. Fresh backfill, a covered trench, a soft shoulder, a hidden septic lid. A lift that is fine on slab is a tip over on fill, and the load chart assumes firm and level, not close enough.

Look up before you go up. Ten feet is the minimum clearance from an overhead power line up to fifty kV, and more above that. A boom does not have to touch a line to kill somebody. Treat every line as live and assume nobody has de energized anything for you.

Do not climb on the rails. Ever. Not to reach the last foot, not to see over, not because you are almost done. The whole system, guardrails and harness both, assumes your feet are on the floor of the basket.

And the pre start. Controls at ground level and at the platform, emergency lowering, horn, tires, leaks, and the fact that the operator is trained on this specific model. The manual lives with the machine for a reason.

Point at these before anybody starts

- The ground under all four wheels or outriggers, and what is underneath it
- Overhead: power lines, service drops, tree limbs, and the clearance to each
- The harness and lanyard for the boom lift, and where the anchor in the basket is
- The guardrails, gate and chains on the scissor lift

- The pre start checklist for this machine, filled in today, not last week
- The load rating plate, and what the platform is actually carrying today

The rules that apply

- Boom and articulating lifts: full body harness with a lanyard attached to the boom or basket anchor, never to an adjacent structure.
- Scissor lifts: stay inside the guardrails with gates and chains closed. That is the fall protection system.
- Keep at least 10 feet of clearance from overhead power lines up to 50 kV, and more above that voltage.
- Set up on firm level ground within the machine's rated slope, with outriggers deployed where the machine has them.
- Do the pre start function check at ground level and platform level before the first lift of the shift.
- Nobody stands or climbs on the rails, the toeboards or a plank laid across the basket.

Ask the crew

- Which lift are you in today, and which rule applies to it, harness or guardrails?
- What is above your work area, and how close does the boom get to it?
- Is the ground under this machine what it looks like, or is there backfill under there?

Close with this

Feet on the floor of the basket, clearance overhead, firm ground under the wheels. That is the whole talk.

Attendance

Everybody who was present signs, including subcontractors and anybody visiting the site.

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This talk is general safety information for a crew briefing, not legal advice and not a substitute for the training your employees are required to have. Standards are quoted for orientation only. Check the current text of the standard and your own state plan, which may be stricter than the federal rule.