



Safety & Risk Office 5-Minute Safety Talk No. 15 – Aerial Lift Safety

Note to Supervisor: This 5-Minute Safety Talk (in some places, it might be called a Toolbox Talk or a Tailgate Talk) is designed not only to communicate important safety information to your employees, but also to be given to them by you, which will hopefully reinforce the message and let them know your expectations for safety. You can use the text below as a script to be rendered verbatim or just as talking points to be stated in your own words. Please also complete the attendance listing on the last page and send it to Safety & Risk, Mail Stop 66.

An aerial lift is any vehicle-mounted device used to elevate personnel in order to perform work above the ground, including:

- Extendable boom platforms
- Aerial ladders
- Articulating (jointed) boom platforms
- Vertical towers
- Any combination of the above.

Workers involved in aerial lift accidents could face electrocution, falls, broken bones and even death. The most common reasons for falls from aerial lifts are hydraulic cylinder failures that cause the boom to drop, outriggers that are not used or are improperly placed causing lift vehicle overturns, workers that are not tied off while they are in the basket and workers that fall or are pulled off a platform when the vehicle is struck by another vehicle or moves unexpectedly.

Preventing Injuries from Aerial Lifts—Before Operation

- Only personnel who are authorized and trained may operate aerial lifts.
- Aerial lifts must have both platform and ground controls.
- Check operating and emergency controls.
- Check safety devices such as outriggers, guardrails and personal fall arrest systems.
- Look for leaks of air, hydraulic fluid and fuel.
- Look for a level surface that won't shift. Never exceed the manufacturer's slope limits.
- Look for hazards such as holes, bumps, debris and overhead power lines.
- Always set outrigger, brakes and wheel chocks, even if on a level surface.
- If working in high traffic areas for pedestrians or vehicles, set up work zone warnings using cones, signs and caution tape. In addition to the aerial lift operator working in the basket, one employee on the ground should be designated as a ground controller to direct pedestrian or vehicular traffic away from the work location.

- Before moving an aerial lift for travel, inspect the boom to ensure that it is properly cradled and secured and that the outriggers are in the stowed position.

Preventing Injuries from Aerial Lifts—During Operation

- Never move an aerial lift when the lift platform is elevated in a working position with employees inside.
- Always close lift platform chains or doors.
- Always wear personal fall arrest equipment (full-body harness) with the self-retracting lifeline attached to the designated anchorage point while in the bucket. This includes during travel of the aerial lift.
- Never use an adjacent pole, structure or piece of equipment as your anchorage point.
- Always stand on the floor of the bucket. Do not sit or climb on or lean over guardrails.
- Do not exceed the lift's load limits.
- The operator must remain in the lift at all times. Do not step out of the lift or on the guardrail to perform work or maintenance.
- Do not place the aerial lift against another object to steady the elevated platform.
- Do not use the aerial lift shall as a crane or other lifting device.
- Always know where overhead power lines are located and stay between 10 and 42 feet away from them, depending on their voltage. Never work above an overhead power line, regardless of the distance.

By following these important safety precautions, you can avoid being injured whenever you have to operate an aerial lift.

5-Minute Safety Talk No. 15 – Aerial Lift Safety Attendance List

Presenter: _____ Date/Time: _____/_____/_____

Printed Name	Campus	Signature
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Send to the Safety & Risk Office, Mail Stop # 66, when completed.