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SAFETY COMMITTEE NEWS BULLETIN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CONSTRUCTION SAFETY COUNCIL

POWERFORWARD DUPAGE SAFETY COMMITTEE MISSION

"To pursue a 'Safety Always' work environment for all working craftsmen and women through education and training"



Aerial Lift Modifications and Alterations

By: Paul A. Satti, M.S., CHST Technical Director, Construction Safety Council

A lot of work is done from aerial lifts. And, as more job-sites start to limit the use of ladders, the aerial lift will be relied on more every day. However, with all its versatility, the aerial lift still poses certain challenges. For years now, I've heard stories of how someone had to stand on mid-rails or fabricate some kind of gizmo (gizmo; shop made bracket/supporting device fabricated for the sole purpose of getting a job done). Doing this, of course would be in direct violation of OSHA and ANSI standards, as well as cost you your job, or even your life!

One such standard is ANSI/SIA A92.6 Self-Propelled Elevating Work Platforms, where it states that modification or alterations of an aerial platform can only be performed with prior written permission of the manufacturer. These modifications include the fabrication of framework, or the mounting of attachments for holding tools or materials onto the platform or the guardrail system. So technically, using a vise-clamp to hold a piece of pipe in place while you cut it is in violation; unless the manufacturer approves such a device. OSHA further mandates that employees shall always stand firmly on the floor of the basket, and shall not sit or climb on the edge of the basket or use planks, ladders, or other devices for a work position. These unsafe behaviors have resulted in 396 aerial lift citations and over \$850,000 in fines (OSHA FY 2011 – 2012).

A research of OSHA's FY13 Fatalities and Catastrophes revealed six aerial lift related deaths, where someone was either crushed and/or fell. We do not know the specific details of these incidents, but from what is described, it sounds like the majority of them were caused by trying to get in close to a roofing structure/pipe or due to overreaching above the guardrails.

5/7/2013	Employee died after the scissor lift he was inside malfunctioned, pinning
	worker between the lift and a pipe.

4/29/2013 Worker died when a hydraulic lift fell, crushing him underneath.

4/23/2013 Employee in a bucket lift died after being pinned between bucket and I-beam.

4/22/2013 Employee died after being caught between boom lift and iron used during welding operations.

3/28/2013 Employee died after falling 30 feet off a scissors lift on which he was working.

3/6/2013 Worker suffocated after becoming trapped in man lift.

If these workers had known of and used the correct aerial lift accessory, they may not have had to put themselves in a dangerous situation that caused their death. If you ever find yourself in a situation where reach is limited or with issues of handling materials, do not try to make what you have work. The solution is to get a different lift and/or use accessories that have written approval from the manufacturer.

One product that's available is the vertical access platform attachment offered by Man Lift MFG Co. It attaches to the frame of the basket to allow for access to narrow spaces and is "manufacturer approved" to be used on Genie brand scissor lifts. Special attachments like this are useful because they allow you to adapt the same lift for different situations, rather than bringing in another costly lift.

And, JLG provides to their customers the Electrician's Package, everything you need to get your electrical work done efficiently, safely and in compliance. The package includes:

- A vise for clamping pipes or holding other work materials.
- An "Electrician's Tree" ideal for wire pulling and reducing friction associated with ground-based wires.
- Pipe racks for storing pipe outside the platform and for reducing trip hazards.
- JLG Workstation great for holding all of your tools within arm's reach; complete with or without a 12V plug.

If you have an idea for an aerial lift accessory, the manufacturers would like to hear about it. Genie has customer feedback forms that documents any unique challenges and needs. These needs assessments are used to design new products. If you would like to get your invention up and going, contact me at psatti@builsafe.org and I will forward your message on.

Until next time, the Construction Safety Council in conjunction with PowerForward DuPage (formerly NECA-IBEW 701 LMCC) reminds you to *Work Smart*, *Build Safe*.



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