

Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPs)

Types of Equipment

Aerial lifts raise personnel to an elevated work position on a platform supported by masts or booms. They include extensible or articulating boom platforms, aerial ladders and vertical towers (mast lifts).

Scissor lifts can lift larger loads and provide more workspace than aerial lifts. They are not for lifting extremely heavy materials. They generally provide the most space for multiple workers. They mostly lift straight up/down but may also shift horizontally.

Vertical mast lifts can lift personnel in tight quarters. They lift straight up/down, have multi-stage masts, and have platform extensions that extend beyond the base of the vehicle.

Preparation

Prepare the People

Everyone who uses mobile elevated work platforms needs training about their equipment and site **BEFORE** they work. Only **trained** and **authorized** persons should operate mobile elevated work platforms.

Prepare the Equipment

Select the appropriate lift for the task/capacity/surface. **WARNING: Operating an indoor, solid-tire, slab lift on outdoor, rough terrain is a common contributor to serious tip-over incidents.**

Follow manufacturer's instructions to perform the **pre-use inspection** of the equipment, including the vehicle and lift components.

If you discover an unsafe condition, tag the lift "Out of Service" and report the issue to the appropriate person immediately.

Prepare the Site

Survey the work area (risk assessment) for:

- Overhead hazards
- Electrical lines
- Moving equipment/people
- Material and debris
- Ground/floor conditions
- Slopes/grades
- Lighting

Take precautions such as:

- Placing barricades
- Posting signs
- Insulating tools/equipment
- De-energizing powered equipment/utilities
- Performing lockout/tagout

Safe Operation

- Extended outriggers or stabilizers can help prevent tip-overs
- Follow manufacturer's directions about operating or not during windy conditions
- Use fall protection and appropriate tie-off points on mobile elevated work platforms
 - You CAN be injured even if the fall arrest system functions flawlessly
- Move with the lift lowered when traveling, and survey the area before lifting again
- Look in the direction in which you are traveling
- Travel with the counterweight up
- Follow manufacturer's guidance about turning on grades
- Do NOT travel with people in the platform or bucket unless the equipment is specifically designed for this type of operation

Working Safely

- Clean slippery substances off shoes and ladder rungs
- Maintain three points of contact when climbing on access ladders
- Close and secure the chain or gate after boarding
- Put a barricade under overhead activity
- Communicate plans to use mobile elevated work platforms
- Use horns and other signaling devices to make your presence known
- Place tools, equipment and materials on the platform before climbing, or hoist tools, equipment and materials up after boarding
- Avoid clutter on working surfaces, clean up as you go, and only take what you need
- Avoid stepping up on anything when on the platform or in the bucket
- Reorient the lift, rather than leaning out
- Avoid exiting the platform or bucket until it is lowered
 - If you MUST exit at heights, follow manufacturer instructions and company policies, which likely include personal fall protection
- You can fall if you exit the lift onto a place without a proper floor and railings
- Employers must have rescue plans that describe what to do if someone falls
- Remove the keys from the mobile elevated work platform to prevent unauthorized use