AERIAL LIFT SAFETY

PREVENTING TIPOVERS AND COLLAPSES

Safety ToolBox Talks BLR

This talk discusses the hazards of aerial lift tipovers and collapses and explains safe work practices for operating aerial lifts to prevent these incidents.

Materials to have on hand:

- Aerial lifts in use at the worksite
- Aerial lift inspection checklist, if used

Items for attendees to consider during talk:

- What are some common causes of aerial lift tipovers?
- Where will you find the rated workload and maximum platform height of an aerial lift?

TALK

Aerial lifts can tip over or collapse for a number of reasons. Common causes of tipovers include high wind and other severe weather conditions, operating on unstable or uneven surfaces, extending the boom too far, loading the basket with too much weight, and damaged or defective equipment.

Before using any aerial lift, review the manufacturer instructions and other safety information posted on the equipment, and read the operating and maintenance manual.

The rated workload and maximum platform height will be posted on the equipment. Never exceed these limits. Some equipment might have different rated workloads that depend on the angle of the boom and on whether outrigger devices or stabilizers are used.

Many aerial lifts are designed with interlock devices that help prevent an operator from accidentally exceeding the stability requirements of the equipment and tipping over. Some types of interlocks you may encounter include driving interlocks, outrigger interlocks, and tilt interlocks. Familiarize yourself with the type of interlock on the aerial lifts you use.

Before you use an aerial lift, check the equipment and the surrounding area for the following hazards:

- **Obvious defects,** such as cracked welds in the basket or the boom equipment.
- **Hydraulic oil leaks.**
- **Signs of wear or damage on control cables.**
- **Lose wire connections.**
- **Poor tire condition.** An improperly inflated or damaged tire can impact the stability and possibly result in a tipover.
- **Improperly functioning operating controls.**
- **Unstable or soft ground.** If a tire or stabilizer is placed on the soft earth, the equipment may tip over when the boom is lifted or extended.
- **Ditches, drop-offs, or holes.** The operator might accidentally drive into one of these and tip

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Talk Date: _____

Location: _____

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Supervisor/ Presenter: _____

Attendees: _____

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Comments: _____

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over. Even placing the equipment near a ditch or hole could result in injury if the side of the hole or ditch were to give way under the weight of the tire or stabilizer.

- **Bumps and other floor obstructions.** Be careful not to drive over these obstructions because they can affect your stability.
- **Debris.** Materials such as garbage, dust, grease, oil, water, or other items could result in your equipment losing stability.

Before elevating anyone in an aerial lift basket, properly set up the vehicle by following these steps:

- Set the brakes so the vehicle will not move while a worker is in the air.
- Place wheel chocks under the tires if the vehicle is on an incline.
- If necessary, position the outriggers or stabilizers on a solid surface.

Before moving the vehicle, make sure the boom is properly cradled and outriggers or stabilizers are returned and stowed in position. Although some equipment is designed to be moved while a worker is in the basket (or even operated by that worker), never move the equipment unless the basket has been lowered and the boom has been retracted.

Make sure the path of travel is firm, level, and free of obstructions. While driving, maintain a safe distance from obstacles, debris, holes, depressions, ramps, and other hazards, and drive at a safe speed for the conditions.