

TOOLBOX TALK #28

SAFETY TIPS ON BOOM LIFTS - PART 1

Boom lifts are an important component in the proper deployment and completion of many construction projects. However, given the size, scale and structure of this type of equipment, they can also pose substantial risk and have the potential to cause serious injury if effective safety measures are not followed. These safety tips are important to consider and implement when operating boom lifts, and can prevent injuries, accidents, damage and liability concerns.



Keep a clean base and circumference

Always make sure that the base and the entire circumference of the boom lift are clear of any personnel while the machine is in use. The circumference of the lift is often significant and tools can easily fall from the platform and seriously hurt anyone who may be standing below. Keeping the entire area clear minimizes the risk of anyone below being hit by objects that may fall. Though very rare, it is also possible for boom lifts to tip over. Keeping the area under and around the boom lift clear will help ensure that no one is hurt if the entire structure tips over.

Use only trained lift operators

Using employees who are properly trained to operate boom lifts, and who maintain relevant safety certifications and knowledge, can help keep you and your coworkers safe while the machine is in use. Training personnel with hands-on assignments that demonstrate their operational knowledge of the lift can help detect potential problems and address them before any accidents happen on the job.

Wear your harness

A simple but vital safety measure is wearing a harness and ensuring the lanyard is fully secured to the anchor point on the basket. While it may seem unlikely that an operator will fall out of the platform, even the slightest bump from another piece of equipment or object can throw an operator off balance and put them at risk of falling. Even a strong gust of wind could knock someone down or off of the platform and cause serious injury.

Don't go over the weight limit

Each boom lift has a specific weight capacity. It is important to identify and adhere to these restrictions. Going over the limit, even slightly, could potentially make the lift top heavy and cause it to tip over. Prior to operation, always account for the weight of the operator on the lift plus all tools and materials on the platform to ensure that the combined weight isn't more than the recommended capacity. It's also important to remember not to use the boom lift for lifting heavy supplies.

(For more boom lift safety tips, see Toolbox Talk #29 in this Volume)