

TOOLBOX TALK #29

SAFETY TIPS ON BOOM LIFTS - PART 2

(This Toolbox Talk is a continuation of Toolbox Talk #28 in this Volume)

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.



Don't climb or sit on outer edges

When on the platform of a boom lift, it's easy to be inclined to climb on the platform edge to reach something instead of moving the entire machine to reach it. This is more dangerous than many realize. Climbing or sitting on the edge of the platform significantly increases the chances of falling off the platform, and can result in serious injury. If there is something that isn't accessible, communicate with the boom lift operator to help get to a safe position where you can easily reach what is needed from the platform.

Avoid windy conditions

When a boom lift is extended very high, the wind can pose a substantial safety concern. If it is strong enough, the wind can knock the machine over completely. Avoid using boom lifts in extremely windy conditions or other adverse weather to avoid the risk of it potentially falling over. Each lift has a limit of how much wind it can withstand. Reviewing the user manual will help the operator understand the specific restrictions of the machine they are operating and identify strategies for using it in challenging weather.

Operate on level ground

The height at which boom lifts can extend makes this equipment particularly vulnerable to tipping over. Ensuring the machine is being operated on level ground and on a stable base will help keep the operator and surrounding workers safe. Using the boom lift brakes correctly is one method that can be implemented to help stabilize the machine's base.

Move the lift correctly

Properly reviewing the operator's manual will help an operator understand how to effectively maneuver the boom lift, and when it is and isn't safe to move the lift while it is extended. As a best practice, it's often best to avoid moving the lift in this manner. Moving a lift while extended creates opportunity for injury and should only be done when it is necessary and only if the operator's manual specifically condones it. Otherwise you should lower the boom lift completely, move it, and then extend where needed.

Operating boom lifts can pose challenges and risks, but following these safety tips can help prevent accidents and injury on site.