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# **OPERATING AERIAL WORK PLATFORMS SAFELY**

*(Concise)*

**Leader's Guide, Fact Sheet  
& Quiz**

Item Number: 4820  
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***This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation.***

## **PREPARING FOR THE MEETING**

Here are a few suggestions for using this program:

- a) Review the contents of the Fact Sheet that immediately follows this page to familiarize yourself with the program topic and the training points discussed in the program. The Fact Sheet also includes a list of Program Objectives that details the information that participants should learn from watching the program.
- b) If required by your organization, make an attendance record to be signed by each participant to document the training to be conducted.
- c) Prepare the area and equipment to be used for the training. Make sure the watching environment is comfortable and free from outside distractions. Also, ensure that participants can see and hear the TV screen or computer monitor without obstructions.
- d) Make copies of the Review Quiz included at the end of this Leader's Guide to be completed by participants at the conclusion of the presentation. Be aware that the page containing the answers to the quiz comes before the quiz itself, which is on the final page.

## **CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION**

- a) Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person an opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.
- b) Introduce the program by its title and explain to participants what they are expected to learn as stated in the Program Objectives of the Fact Sheet.
- c) Play the program without interruption. Upon completion, lead discussions about your organization's specific policies regarding the subject matter. Make sure to note any unique hazards associated with the program's topic that participants may encounter while performing their job duties at your facility.
- d) Hand out copies of the review quiz to all of the participants and make sure each one completes it before concluding the training session.

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## FACT SHEET

**LENGTH: 10 MINUTES**

**PRODUCTION YEAR: 2016**

### **PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:**

Aerial work platforms are an essential tool used to safely elevate personnel. These useful platforms come in various sizes and configurations, including scissor lifts, boom lifts and articulating boom lifts. When a maintenance or construction worker must perform a task at an elevated working position, these powerful machines are often called on to do the job. This program discusses some of the common hazards that aerial work platform operators must consider when using this equipment as well as the safe work practices and operating techniques that must be followed to ensure everyone's safety during the use of an aerial work platform.

Topics include the pre-operational inspection, testing the operating controls, inspecting the path of travel, driving safely, raising the lift safely, safe work practices and lowering the lift.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

After watching the program, the participant will be able to explain the following:

- What to look for when conducting the pre-operational inspection;
- How to properly test the operating controls;
- What hazards to check for when inspecting the path of travel;
- How to drive the lift safely;
- How to safely raise the lift;
- Which safe work practices to follow while working on the platform;
- How to properly lower and dismount from the platform.

### **PROGRAM OUTLINE**

#### **TRAINING AND AUTHORIZATION**

- Before operating an aerial work platform, the operator must be properly trained and qualified as well as authorized by their employer to do so.
- There are many types and styles of aerial lifts and each type has unique operating and stability characteristics. This is why operators must be trained on the specific type of lift they will be operating and must receive additional training before being allowed to operate any other type of lift.

#### **THE PRE-OPERATIONAL INSPECTION**

- The pre-operational inspection is an important part of using any lift.
- Its purpose is to verify that the equipment and all of its components are in safe operating condition. Remember, your life depends on the proper operation of your lift.
- Start your initial inspection by locating the owner's and maintenance manuals. These manuals must stay onboard the lift at all times. This is important so that the manual can be consulted when additional information about the lift is needed.
- Next, circle the lift and look for any loose or broken parts, fluid leaks, structural damage or any other indicators of damage or unsafe conditions.
- Check the tires for proper tread, excessive wear, cuts or embedded objects. When applicable, make sure all tires are inflated to the manufacturer's recommended air pressure.
- Many lifts have fluid levels that must be checked. Be sure oil, hydraulic fluid, fuel and coolant are all at the appropriate level.
- All safety and warning placards must be in place and legible.
- Inspect the lift's guardrails and gates. They should not have cracked welds or any missing parts.
- If the lift has a swinging gate, it must only swing inward. Verify that it cannot swing outwards.

#### **TESTING THE OPERATING CONTROLS**

- Upon conclusion of the initial inspection of the lift, you must then test the lift's operating and emergency controls.
- Start with testing the function of the lower level controls. Test each movement of the platform to make sure all controls are working properly.

- Also, confirm that the lower level emergency stop is functioning as it should. Then turn the selector switch to select the upper level controls so they may be tested.
- In addition to the controls used to maneuver the platform, the upper level controls also include the driving controls for the lift.
- Test the forward and reverse controls as well as the steering controls. Also, test that the brakes are functioning properly.
- Then test the controls that lift, lower and manipulate the platform to make sure each control works as expected.
- If you discover any defects or damage during the pre-operational inspection, follow your company's procedure for removing the vehicle from service so it can be properly repaired. Never operate a defective or damaged lift.

### **INSPECTING THE PATH OF TRAVEL**

- Inspect the route and look for any debris or obstacles that are in the way. Remove any items that are in your path or may interfere with your ability to maneuver the lift into position.
- Also look for drop offs, soft or unstable soil, slopes, pot holes or curbs. These items can cause a lift to become unlevelled and can contribute to a tip-over.

### **MOUNTING THE LIFT AND DRIVING SAFELY**

- Inform any co-workers in the affected areas that you are preparing to move the vehicle to the work zone.
- To mount the lift, face the vehicle squarely and climb into the platform while maintaining a good grip and three points of contact while climbing. Watch your head if you are required to duck under a fixed guardrail.
- Immediately close any access gates and secure any chains or guardrails after mounting.
- Once safely inside the platform, attach your lanyard to one of the manufacturer's approved anchor points. Do not connect your lanyard to the guardrail.
- Before moving the lift, and when maneuvering in tight spaces, check the position of the wheels to make sure you understand which direction the lift will go.
- Boom lifts have a decal which indicates which direction is forward travel and which direction is reverse travel. Again, make sure you understand which direction the lift will go before moving it.
- When driving the lift, keep the platform fully lowered and travel at a speed that will allow you to avoid obstructions and co-workers safely.
- Many lifts have a selector switch which restricts the lift's speed. If this is the case, place the lift in slow mode when operating in tight areas, near drop offs or while elevated.
- While driving, face the direction of travel and frequently check clearances around, above and below the unit. If your view is obstructed, have a co-worker serve as a spotter to help guide you around obstacles and to watch for other moving equipment.
- Before driving up or down an incline, make sure its grade does not exceed your vehicle's recommended rating for these surfaces. Always fully lower the lift before driving on an incline.

### **RAISING THE LIFT SAFELY**

- Upon arrival, make sure you have parked the lift on a firm, flat surface.
- If the lift is equipped with stabilizing devices such as outriggers, they must be deployed. The feet of any stabilizers must be placed on firm ground and the stabilizers adjusted to ensure the lift is level.
- Scan the area above, below and around the platform for other personnel or hazards before raising, rotating or extending the lift's platform.
- Be aware of the lift's weight capacity. The total weight of all tools, equipment and personnel must not exceed this weight capacity.

### **SAFE WORK PRACTICES**

- Be aware of the lift's weight capacity. The total weight of all tools, equipment and personnel must not exceed this weight capacity.
- To avoid electrocution, be extra cautious when elevating in the vicinity of power lines and other electrical equipment. Maintain a minimum clearance of 10 feet from energized parts or wires up to 50,000 volts. Refer to the owner's manual for clearance distances for higher voltages.
- Let's now discuss some safe work practices to follow once you have reached the working position.
- Keep the platform floor free of obstacles and debris that could cause a slip or trip. Make sure tools, power cords and other equipment are located in areas where you will not be standing or walking.
- You should be able to perform your work with both feet on the floor. If you can't reach your work, you must raise the platform or reposition it.

- Never stand or sit on the guardrails and never use stools, ladders or other objects to reach higher. Again, you must work with your feet flat on the floor.
- Keep your lanyard connected to the manufacturer's approved tie off point at all times while you are on the platform.
- While performing your work, be careful not to exceed your lift's horizontal load or "side load" rating. Excessive side loads can cause a lift to tip over. This important information can be found in the owner's manual and is also frequently displayed on the lift itself.

#### **LOWERING AND DISMOUNTING THE LIFT**

- When you have concluded the elevated work, it is important that you lower the lift in a safe manner and then park and dismount the lift safely.
- When your work is complete and you are ready to lower the platform, make sure that the surrounding area is clear of equipment, personnel and other obstructions.
- Make sure the lift or any of its mechanisms do not become caught on any solid object while lowering.
- When all work is complete and the lift is fully lowered, it should be returned to its proper storage location.
- When dismounting the lift, face the vehicle and maintain three-points of contact while carefully descending to the floor or ground.
- As the operator of an aerial work platform, you carry a large responsibility. Put your training into practice by choosing to operate your lift in a safe and careful manner. Always remember, the person most responsible for your safety is you.

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**ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUIZ**

1. c

2. a

3. b

4. a

5. a

6. e

7. b

8. a

9. a

10. c

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**REVIEW QUIZ**

*The following questions are provided to determine how well you understand the information presented in this program.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. You should begin your initial pre-operational inspection of a lift by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Circling the lift to look for unsafe conditions
  - b. Checking the tires for excessive wear or cuts
  - c. Locating the owner's and maintenance manuals
2. If a lift has a swinging gate, it must only swing \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Inward
  - b. Outward
3. Only the lower level controls of a lift must be tested and verified before use.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ level controls include the driving controls for a lift.
  - a. Upper
  - b. Lower
5. If you discover any defects or damage during the pre-operational inspection, you should follow your company's procedure for removing the vehicle from service so it can be properly repaired.
  - a. True
  - b. False
6. When inspecting the path of travel, you should look for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Drop offs
  - b. Soft soil
  - c. Pot holes
  - d. Curbs
  - e. All of the above
7. Once you are safely inside the platform after mounting, you should attach your lanyard to one of the approved anchor points or the guardrail.
  - a. True
  - b. False
8. When driving the lift on an incline, you should keep the platform fully lowered.
  - a. True
  - b. False
9. The tilt alarm on a lift will activate when the vehicle is more than \_\_\_\_\_ out of level.
  - a. 5 degrees
  - b. 10 degrees
  - c. 15 degrees
10. What should you do if you are unable to reach your work while on the platform?
  - a. Stand on the guardrail
  - b. Use a stool or a ladder
  - c. Raise or reposition the platform