

# Safety Facts: Scissor Lift Safety\*



Scissor lifts are a relatively economical way to work at height safely and efficiently and as a result they are present on most medium to large workplaces, they are economical to rent so you even see them on small sites during projects. They are simple to operate, but because the operators are working at height, they are exposed to serious fall hazards if they do not clearly understand the safe operation procedures and inspections required.

## What Training Is Required for Forklift Operation?

Scissor lift operators must receive training and instruction. This instruction must include competency training by a certified aerial work platform instructor.

Operators must also demonstrate that can they conduct a full pre-shift inspection of their equipment to ensure that it is safe operating condition prior to use, and know to report any defects immediately.

Certified operators must also receive regular refresher training to maintain their certification.

## Mechanism of Injury

- Tip over while operating due to improper operation, speed, and disabled safety devices.
- Falling from elevated position, sometimes workers are tempted to stand on platform hand railings in order to reach certain tasks, if this occurs the platform hand railing will be ineffective as fall protection.
- Contact with pedestrians, the scissor lifts are quiet and it is common for people not to hear them coming on walk in front of them at aisle intersections in warehouses or on blind corners on construction sites.

## Associated Risks

- Only allow trained certified operators to operate a scissor lift.
- Ensure that pre-use inspections are completed to ensure safety features are checked pre use before operating scissor lift.
- Do not exceed manufactures rated design capacity for number of people or weight capacity.
- Remember to always inspect the task area for possible hazards prior to locating a scissor lift. Hazards such as unstable ground conditions, sump holes, and overhead electrical lines are often overlooked.
- Be aware of design limitations of the scissor lift you are operating, they are designed for lifting people they are not designed to be used as a crane for lifting materials.



## Preventative Next Steps

- Training and supervision—ensure that workers receive the necessary certification training, mentoring and supervision to use site specific scissor lifts safely.
- Train workers to assess the site specific work area for possible hazards such as, ground conditions, electrical hazards, mechanical hazards (for example chain drives are not required to be guarded if they are above 8 feet) mobile equipment or pedestrian traffic, changing weather if outdoors, snow, rain, lightning storms and wind are concerns.
- Ensure that scissor lifts receive their annual safety inspection by a qualified inspector.
- Ensure that manufactures safe operation and maintenance manual is all ways present in scissor lift water tight storage container for easy reference. (OHSR 13.21)
- Include company scissor lifts on regular workplace inspections to ensure that they are in good working order, that warning labels, guardrails and access points are kept in good condition, and required manuals and inspection logs are present.
- Monitor scissor lift operation to ensure that practice does not drift away from recommended operating procedures.
- Ensure that scissor lifts do not leave the pavement unless they are designated as rough terrain capable.



**For additional resources visit:**

*Work Safe BC*

