

Chapter 22 BUCKET TRUCK SAFETY

Company workers who operate aerial platform/bucket trucks should have a policy regarding truck safety and safe work practices.

In order to ensure the safety employees who operate aerial platform/bucket trucks, and in compliance with Cal/OSHA regulations, this company requires that:

- Aerial platform trucks/bucket trucks may only be operated and used by authorized personnel. In order to be authorized to operate an aerial platform truck/bucket truck, workers must complete an appropriate training course covering this policy; the location and operation of all truck controls; truck decals and manuals; safe work practices and procedures applicable to anticipated job tasks and settings; and a field test demonstrating the ability to operate the truck safely. Towering operations must not be performed by personnel who have not received specialized training in safe towering practices and procedures.
- Operators must ensure that trucks carry, at all times: the user's manual, traffic control devices, fall protection equipment, fire extinguishing equipment, and wheel chocks.
- Operators must complete a pre-shift inspection before each shift when the truck will be used. Any deficiencies must be recorded in writing and reported to the maintenance supervisor in charge of truck maintenance. If deficiencies are identified that present a hazard to the operator, the truck must be taken out of service until the hazardous condition is repaired.
- Trucks shall be operated by not less than two-man teams, with one operator remaining on the ground at all times.
- Operators working in the elevated bucket of the truck must wear fall protection at all times. Operators must wear additional safety equipment when working as required by the type of work being performed.
- Operators must inspect the work site for safety before beginning work, and take any necessary precautions, including placement of traffic control devices

Don't Leave Bucket Truck Safety Up in the Air

A bucket truck is a useful piece of equipment, allowing work at height to be performed more easily and safely. However, when used improperly, bucket trucks can be the source of serious injuries and fatalities. The following are some of the key elements of bucket truck safety:

A daily safety check: Prior to being dispatched for work each day, the bucket truck should be inspected. This check should include a visual inspection of the vehicle exterior, including checking for broken, damaged, loose, or missing parts; tire condition; oil and hydraulic leaks; rust, cracks, or other physical damage or wear and tear that could affect safe operation; and whether all required decals and stickers are in place on or around the articulating boom and that those decals and stickers are legible and

understandable. Controls should also be tested to ensure that they are in good working order. Any problems should be corrected before the bucket truck is used.

Evaluation of work site conditions: A bucket truck should always be parked on level ground. The work area should also be evaluated for overhead hazards, particularly those that might involve electrical power lines. Note that even an insulated bucket does not provide complete protection from electrical hazards. For this reason, only those employees who have specifically received training regarding overhead electrical hazards and the necessary precautions should be allowed to operate a bucket truck near electrical power lines. Also, bucket trucks should not be used in high wind conditions.

Proper truck set up: When a bucket truck is in use, the brake should be set. If outriggers are used, they should be positioned on pads or a solid surface. Wheel chocks should be installed before operating the bucket truck, especially on inclined surfaces. If the bucket truck is used on an inclined surface, such as a ramp or slope, ensure that the grade does not exceed the manufacturer's recommendations. Load and distribution should always be checked to ensure that they are within the manufacturer's recommendations. The truck should not be moved when the bucket is raised, especially if there is someone in the bucket. Finally, except in the event of an emergency, the lower controls of the bucket truck should never be operated without the knowledge and permission of the employee in the bucket. Trucks are equipped with back-up alarms. When no back-up warning alarm is available a spotter must be used to assist in the backing up of the truck.

Use of fall protection: Employees who work in the bucket must always wear appropriate fall protection, including a safety belt, body belt, or body harness equipped with a safety strap or lanyard that is secured to the bucket truck (belting off to adjacent structures, such as poles, equipment, or buildings is prohibited). While employees are working in the bucket, they should stand with both feet firmly on the floor of the bucket and never sit or climb on the edge of the bucket, or use planks, ladders, or other items to elevate themselves outside the bucket.

Employee training: Only those employees who have received training in the safe operation of a bucket truck should be allowed to operate the bucket truck.

MODIFIED EQUIPMENT

Equipment that has had modifications or additions which affect the safe operation of the equipment (such as modifications or additions involving a safety device or operational aid, critical part of a control system, power plant, braking system, load-sustaining structural components, or in-use operating mechanism) or capacity must be inspected by a qualified person after such modifications/additions have been completed, prior to initial use. The inspection must meet all of the following requirements:

1. The inspection must assure that the modifications or additions have been done in accordance with the approval obtained pursuant to OSHA § 1926.1434 (Equipment modifications).
2. The inspection must include functional testing of the equipment.
3. Equipment must not be used until an inspection pursuant to item 1 is complete.

Modifications or additions which affect the capacity or safe operation of the equipment are prohibited except where:

1. The manufacturer approves the modifications/additions in writing.

2. Procedures, instruction manuals and instruction plates/tags/decals are modified as necessary to accord with the modification/addition.
3. The original safety factor of the equipment is not reduced.

Manufacturer refusal to review request. The manufacturer is provided a detailed description of the proposed modification/addition, is asked to approve the modification/addition, but it declines to review the technical merits of the proposal or fails, within 30 days, to acknowledge the request or initiate the review, and all of the following are met:

1. A registered professional engineer who is a qualified person with respect to the equipment involved:
2. Approves the modification/addition and specifies the equipment configurations to which that approval applies, and
3. Modifies load charts, procedures, instruction manuals and instruction plates/tags/decals as necessary to accord with the modification/addition.
4. The original safety factor of the equipment is not reduced.