



ACCESSING SAFETY KNOWLEDGE (ASK) SHEET: MOBILE ELEVATED WORK PLATFORMS: THINGS TO CONSIDER

Falls have been the leading cause of death in construction for years and in just about every single case, the person who dies either wasn't wearing fall protection or wasn't wearing it properly. In the case of Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPS) the proper use of personal fall arrest systems is vital in case of emergency.

When developing or updating a MEWPS procedure, there are some key factors that need to be considered.

1. There are five principles to safe operation of any MEWP:
 - a. Pre-operation inspection
 - b. Function Test
 - c. Workplace Inspection for Hazards
 - d. Avoid hazardous condition – OPERATOR TRAINING BY COMPETENT PERSONS
 - e. Use machine only for intended use
2. All MEWPS operators must be trained on the specifications of the machine that will be used. To do this, you must have both an Operators manual and safety manual on every machine. EVERY machine is different – take the time to review operating characteristics before you start a machine.
3. Your rental vendor can provide training for your employees on any piece of equipment. This is necessary to be compliant with OSHA regulations, but more importantly to ensure the safe operation of machines for operators and pedestrian traffic.
4. All MEWPS require the operator to tie off on the work platform with a personal fall arrest system., usually an adjustable positioning lanyard. Review the individual requirements of the machine.
5. Elevated driving requires skill and practice. Before you place anyone in danger, observe the operation of the equipment by your employee. It will be readily obvious if your employee is not experienced – look for confusion about controls, jerky operation.
6. Understand the liability involved with operating MEWPS on a busy construction worksite with pedestrian and vehicular traffic. If your operators are not trained, you are creating a greater hazard. There are no short cuts to training on Mobile Elevated Work Platforms that include Aerial Lifts, Boom lifts, and in some cases Rough Terrain Forklifts. Always make the safe decision and access your provider for Competent Operator Training.

Provided by the ASA – Houston Chapter Safety Committee

P.O. Box 924943 • Houston, Texas 77292 • 281.679.1877 • asahouston.org • asa@asahouston.org

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