Toolbox talk

Aerial lifts near power lines

Checking overhead before the lift moves, the 10-foot rule, and staying in the basket and tied off.

Contact with an overhead line is one of the fastest ways to die in a boom lift.

Key point **Stay at least 10 feet from overhead lines, and so does everything you're holding.**

What happened

In Kentucky in 2023, two roofers were coming down from a roof in a telescoping boom lift when the lift reached the overhead lines. The 27-year-old operator's head touched a line and he was electrocuted.

Kentucky FACE report 23KY005

Look up before you move

Before the lift moves, find every overhead line along the travel path and over the work area. Before work starts, the employer has to find out where energized lines are and tell the crew.

Check again every time the lift is repositioned. A line that was clear at 20 feet up may not be clear at 40.

Keep 10 feet away

Keep the lift, the basket and yourself at least 10 feet from the nearest overhead line. Anything conductive you're handling stays 10 feet away too, like pipe, conduit, wire or tools.

Treat every line as energized, even if it's down or looks insulated. Only qualified line workers work closer.

Working in the basket

Stand on the floor of the basket. Don't sit or climb on the rails, and don't stand on planks or ladders to reach farther. Tie off to the boom or the basket, never to a nearby pole or structure.

Watch for joists and beams overhead. If the basket moves, you can get crushed between the rail and the steel.

Show me Stand where the lift will set up, point out every line overhead, and trace the path the boom will travel.

Ask the crew

1. Who checks the overhead again when the lift moves to the next spot?
2. What long or metal material are you taking up in the basket today?

Sources: 29 CFR 1926.416(a)(3); 1926.453(b)(2)(iii), (b)(2)(iv); OSHA Using Aerial Lifts fact sheet

Crew sign-in

Aerial lifts near power lines

Date _____ **Site or project** _____

Presented by _____ **Company** _____

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Signing means you attended this talk and had the chance to ask questions.