

Boom lifts: reach safely, stay within the plan

Talk 17 of 52 | Week 17 | Working at height

Leader: adapt this talk to today's electrical work and site procedures. See the educational-use and liability notice on page 2.

START THE CONVERSATION

An electrician needs to reach an exterior lighting point using a boom lift. The safe setup includes more than reaching the fixture: the ground, swing area, electrical lines, and rescue arrangements all matter.

KEY TALKING POINTS

1. Use the equipment only with the required training and authorization. Inspect it according to the employer's procedure and manufacturer instructions. Report defects and remove unsafe equipment from service rather than trying to complete one last task.
2. Review the required personal fall protection, approved attachment points, capacity, and operating limits for the machine. Do not use an adjacent structure as an improvised attachment point or assume the rules for a scissor lift apply to a boom lift.
3. Electrical job example: the fixture is within reach from a paved area, but the planned boom movement passes near overhead lines. Resolve that electrical exposure through the approved plan before operation. Reaching the destination safely does not make every path to it safe.
4. Account for the platform load, including people, fixtures, tools, and material. Discuss how supplies will be handled without using the machine as a crane or creating an unstable arrangement. Obtain a different method when the task exceeds the machine's intended use.
5. Keep the swing and travel areas controlled. Coordinate with workers below and with vehicle operators so that someone cannot enter a pinch point while watching another activity. Reassess when the work area becomes crowded or the intended route changes.
6. Ask what will happen if the worker cannot comfortably reach the connection point from inside the platform. The response is to reposition or change the access plan within the equipment limits, not climb onto rails or improvise an extension.
7. Confirm communication between the platform and ground personnel. Identify who knows the emergency controls and how responders would reach the machine. Weather, ground changes, and an altered task can all require stopping and reviewing the plan before further movement.

ASK THE CREW

1. Where is the swing-area boundary?
2. What would make us change the access method?

BEFORE WORK STARTS

Confirm the operator, protection system, machine limits, and ground-support arrangements before use.

OSHA SOURCES / FURTHER READING

OSHA: Aerial lifts

Attendance & action record

Boom lifts: reach safely, stay within the plan

Date: _____ Leader: _____

Company / jobsite: _____

Site hazards and controls discussed:

Follow-up action / responsible person / due date:

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Participant name	Signature / acknowledgment

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