

Hazard Alert



Using Platform Material Hoists Near Electricity

Purpose

Roofing and construction trade workers can be exposed to many potential hazards including contact with energized power lines and other electrical equipment. Ladder platform material hoists are routinely used to lift materials to the rooftop area. These hoists are motorized and generally made of conductive materials such as aluminum and steel, which increases the potential of injury through electrical contact. Site-specific hazard assessments must be conducted and safe work procedures need to be developed and followed with respect to the set-up, use and dismantling of the ladder platform hoists.

Other potential safety issues with the use of materials hoists include:

- Improper assembly of the hoist sections.
- Improper raising and lowering of the hoist.
- Exceeding weight restrictions.
- Lack of operator training.
- Lack of hoist cable inspections or replacement.
- Worn equipment components.
- Using the hoist as a means of accessing a rooftop.

Electrical Injury

Direct contact with electrical current can be deadly. While some electrical burns look minor, there may be serious internal damage, especially to the heart, muscles or brain.

Some injuries that can result from electricity include:

- Cardiac arrest due to the electrical effect on the heart.
- Muscle, nerve and tissue destruction from the passing of a current through the body.
- Thermal burns from contact with the electrical source.
- Physical harm from falls due to muscle spasms.

Recommended Precautions

- Successful completion of power line hazard training for all workers.
- Contact local utilities for minimum clearance distances when working near high voltage lines.
- Ensure that high voltage sources are de-energized or insulated.
- Ensure proper grounding of equipment made of conductive materials.
- Completion of a thorough hazard assessment prior to the use of conductive equipment.
- Develop a work plan for use of platform material hoists and other conductive equipment near electricity.
- Ensure all workers are trained in the assembly, mechanical use and operation of the hoist.
- Follow the hoist manufacturer guidelines.
- Consideration should be given to using an alternative method to hoist materials, such as a boom truck with a certified operator.

