

Fatality Narrative

Painter Electrocuted When Elevating Boom Manlift Contacts Powerline*

Industry: Painting	Release Date: January 9, 2003
Occupation: Painter	Case No.: 02WA04601
Task: Operating elevating boom manlift	SHARP Report No.: 71-7-2003
Type of Incident: Electrocution/Fall	

On August 4, 2002, a painter was killed when he fell from the bucket of an elevating boom type manlift after suffering electrocution when he came in contact with an energized overhead powerline. The 48-year-old worker was on his second day on the job with his employer, a painting contractor. The job involved painting the exterior of a multi-story, multi-unit condominium. He was hired on for the duration of the job. Prior to the incident, a supervisor had given the worker a fall protection harness. He was not given any training or instruction in using the lift, he had never used such a lift before. The supervisor then left the worker in order to attend to another task. The worker then got into the bucket of the manlift and raised it to about 35 feet where it contacted an energized 26,000 volt powerline. The worker then somehow fell from the lift and struck the ground. He was taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by law)

- ! Evaluate the job site for potential electrocution hazards before starting work.
- Access the work area using a method that won't expose workers to live overhead power transmission lines.
- Qualified individuals must train users of aerial lifts in their safe operation and the hazards associated with their use. Workers should be trained on the specific model of aerial lift being used at the job site, as controls and operating procedures may vary from one type or model to another.
- ! Always operate aerial lifts in accordance with manufacturer's operating instructions and safety rules.
- The level of supervision over a job should be dictated based on the worker's level of experience and hazard of the operation.
- ! Workers must stay at least 10 feet away from live overhead power transmission lines, unless they are qualified for doing electrical work.
- ! When working at elevation, the appropriate fall protection equipment must be used.

State Wide Statistics: This was the 42nd work-related fatality in Washington State during the year 2002 and was the 9th construction fatality of the year. This was also the 4th electrocution-related death of the year.

**This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employees in a timely manner of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State. We encourage you to consider the above information as you make safety decisions for or recommendations to your company or constituency. The information in this notice is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.*

Developed by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) and Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) Programs at the WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277, <http://www.lni.wa.gov/sharp/face>.