



# Tailgate Safety Training for Landscaping and Horticultural Services

Agricultural Safety Program, 590 Woody Hayes Drive, Columbus, OH 43210

## Bucket Trucks and Aerial Lifts

**Objective: Use bucket trucks and aerial lifts safely.**

### ***How to Use This Module***

Bucket trucks and aerial lifts can make it easy to work in trees, but they can also be dangerous. For this module:

- Review the information below on hazards and safety practices.
- Share examples of risks of bucket trucks and aerial lifts with other workers.
- Ask your supervisor to observe as you practice safe operations.
- Review the important points.
- Take the True/False quiz to check your learning.

### **Background**

According to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) statistics, some 30 workers die each year from using aerial lifts. More than half of those deaths involve bucket trucks. Most of the others involve aerial lifts. A tree can strike the bucket and throw the worker out. Power lines might touch the bucket or lift and electrocute the worker.

For more details on related safe practices, refer to these Tailgate Safety Training modules:

- *Preventing Falls From Trees*
- *Overhead Electrical Hazards*
- *Struck-By Accidents*
- *Tree Pruning, Trimming, and Felling Safety*

### **Bucket Trucks and Aerial Lift Hazards**

- Tip-overs
- Falls
- Electrocution
- Being caught between the lift buckets or guardrail and trees
- Being struck by falling branches or trees

### **General Safety Tips**

- Do not operate a lift unless you have received proper training.

- Keep the lift controls clean and legible.
- Wear a full-body harness when using the bucket truck.
- Always close lift platform chains or doors.
- Stand on the floor of the bucket or lift platform. Do not climb on or lean over guardrails.
- Do not ride on bumpers.
- Do not exceed manufacturer's load-capacity limits.
- Use work-zone warnings like cones and signs if working near traffic.
- Do not modify an aerial lift without written permission of the manufacturer.
- Use proper personal fall protection.

## To Prevent Electrocution

- Keep yourself and all objects at least 10 feet away from any conductors.
- Non-electrical workers must stay at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines.
- Electrical workers must insulate power lines. Use proper personal protective tools.
- Insulated buckets help protect against electrocution. However, you must make sure there is no other path for the electricity to ground. Never touch another wire.

## To Prevent Falls

- On bucket trucks, wear a full-body harness and lanyard or a restraining device with a 2-foot lanyard. This will keep you inside guardrails.

## To Prevent Tip-Overs

- Do not drive with the lift platform elevated.
- Do not exceed vertical or horizontal reach limits.
- Do not exceed the specified load-capacity of the lift.
- On an elevated scissor lift, avoid pushing or pulling.

## Review These Important Points

- Always close lift platform chains or doors.
- Do not climb on or lean over guardrails, or ride on bumpers.
- Do not exceed load-capacity limits.

## About These Modules

The author team for the training modules in the landscape and horticultural tailgate training series includes Dee Jepsen, Program Director, Agricultural Safety and Health, Ohio State University Extension; Michael Wonacott, Research Specialist, Vocational Education; Peter Ling, Greenhouse Specialist; and Thomas Bean, Agricultural Safety Specialist. Modules were developed with funding from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Grant Number 46E3-HT09.

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Answer Key: 1 = F, 2 = F, 3 = T, 4 = T, 5 = T.

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*Name* \_\_\_\_\_

### True or False?

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Workers can modify an aerial lift without written permission of the manufacturer.     | T | F |
| 2. Non-electrical workers must stay at least 5 feet away from overhead power lines.      | T | F |
| 3. Electrical workers must insulate power lines or use proper personal protective tools. | T | F |
| 4. Do not drive with the lift platform elevated.   | T | F |
| 5. On an elevated scissor lift, avoid too much pushing or pulling.                       | T | F |