



MAFES Dawg Tracks

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Vehicle Lift Safety



Several of our research farm shops have vehicle lifts. These lifts are labor saving and efficient for many types of vehicle automotive repairs, such as: mufflers, tires, and repairs that require working on the underside of the vehicles. Like any type of equipment, basic safety rules for their use must be considered. It is critical that the employees who will be using the equipment must read and be completely familiar with the manufacturer's instruction manual. Failure to heed the vehicle lift safety rules could lead to a serious injury or worse.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in 2003, there were 15,000 people treated in hospitals for vehicle lift accidents, including 2,000 fractures and 1,500 head injuries.

Following are some safety tips as Do's and Don'ts of lift use that will be extremely beneficial if they are distributed to the pertinent parties at the respective stations:

Do's -

- ✓ Employers should use the instruction manual and take the necessary time to have an orientation period of the manufacturer's instruction manual with the employees that might be using the lift.
- ✓ A daily inspection of the lift should be performed before its use.
- ✓ Make sure that the lift's locking devices engage.
- ✓ Wear safety glasses for work done under the vehicle.
- ✓ Make sure that the vehicle is centered and balanced on the lift as described in the instruction manual.
- ✓ If the lift is the drive-on type, be sure that the wheels are chocked before raising the lift.
- ✓ Check the ceiling clearance before raising trucks and RVs.
- ✓ When the vehicle is raised to knee height, check it for stability.
- ✓ Clear the area of tools and bystanders before lowering the vehicle.

Don'ts -

- Never raise a vehicle that has occupant inside.
- Don't exceed the capacity of the lift.
- Never stand below a vehicle on a lift that does not have the locking devices engaged.
- If vehicle support stands are used, such as those used to hold transmissions, motors or chassis, be sure that they are cleared before lowering a vehicle. It is possible that the support stand could cause the vehicle to tip over as it is lowered onto the support stand. Instead, raise the support stand up until it makes solid contact with the vehicle once it has reached the proper height.
- Do not try to repair a faulty lift yourself. Tell your supervisor that there is a problem.

The Automobile Lift Institute has published a chart for safety tips involving the lifts. Following is a reprint that could be posted in the area of your vehicle lift as a reminder to observe these and look at them occasionally. We can never practice good safety rules enough!

AUTOMOBILE LIFT SAFETY TIPS:

- ❖ Inspect your lift daily. Never operate if it malfunctions or if it has broken parts. Repairs should be made with original equipment parts.
- ❖ Operating controls are designed to close when released. Don't block them open or override them.
- ❖ Never overload your lift. Manufacturer's rated capacity is shown on the nameplate affixed to the lift.
- ❖ The positioning of the vehicle, and operation of the lift, should be done by trained and authorized personnel only.
- ❖ Never raise the vehicle with someone inside of it. Customers or bystanders should not be in the lift area during operation.
- ❖ Always keep the lift area free of obstructions, grease, oil trash and other debris.
- ❖ Before driving vehicle over the lift, position the arms and supports to provide unobstructed clearance. Do not hit or run over lift arms, adapters, or axle supports. This could damage the lift or the vehicle.
- ❖ Load the vehicle on the lift carefully. Position lift supports to contact at the vehicle manufacturer's recommended lifting points. Raise lift until supports contact the vehicle. Check supports for secure contact with the vehicle. Raise lift to desired working height. **CAUTION:** If you are working under the vehicle, the lift should be raised high enough for locking device to be engaged.
- ❖ Note that with some vehicles, the removal (or installation) of components may cause a critical shift in the car center of gravity and could result in raised vehicle instability. Refer to the vehicle manufacturer's service manual for recommended procedures when the vehicle components are removed.
- ❖ Before lowering lift, be sure to remove tool trays, stands, etc., from under the vehicle. Release the locking devices before attempting to lower the lift.
- ❖ Before removing vehicle from lift, position lift arms and supports to provide an unobstructed exit. (See item #7)

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Excerpts: www.ehow.com
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