

Fall Protection for Scissors Lift Aerial Work Platforms

Fall protection in the form of a full body harness and tether is not required by OSHA or ANSI / SIA when operating a scissors lift AWP, per ANSI / SIA A92.6 - 2006, paragraph 8.10 (1).

The railings around the platform are considered to be the fall protection for this class of machines which are considered to be "mobile scaffolds".

Scissors lift AWP's are considered by OSHA to be mobile scaffolds and must be used according to the Code of Federal Regulations for construction safety found in 29 CFR 1926.452.

OSHA Standard 1926.452 does not require employees to be tied-off when working from scissors lifts that have properly maintained guardrails. Scissors lifts are covered by the non-aerial lift portions of the scaffold standard. Therefore, §1926.451(g) applies, which requires that employees on a scaffold more than 10 feet above a lower level must be protected from falling by restraint systems, fall arrest systems, or guardrails (Note: the standard mandates guardrails for some types of scaffolds). Tying-off is not required where protection is afforded by guardrails.

However, employer or jobsite rules may include a requirement for the use of fall protection in the form of a body harness and tether.

Consult the operator's manual for the machine you operate for the manufacturer's instructions for the proper use of fall protection.

When fall protection is required or used, you must insure that the tether is of the proper length and that it is attached to a proper anchor point.

Some manufacturers of scissors lift AWP's do not recommend the use of fall protection in the form of a body harness and tether because if the operator falls over the guard rails and outside of the platform, his body weight may cause the machine to tip over onto him.

The rationale for not requiring fall protection in the form of a body harness and tether or lanyard is that:

- Scissors lift AWP's are intended for use only on solid level surfaces, such as concrete.
- The operator is to be standing on the platform surface at all times and is to avoid reaching or leaning outside the railings.
- Thus, the safety hand railings around the perimeter of the platform serve as the fall protection system for this type of AWP.

However, some job sites and/or some employers require the use of fall protection in the form of a safety harness and tether or lanyard when operating a scissors lift AWP. If this is the case at your job site,

- Use only a short lanyard or tether anchored near the bottom of the platform so as to restrict the operator to the confines within the guardrail system and, so as to prevent the operator's body from going over the guardrails and outside the confines of the platform.
- Note that this is fall protection and not fall arrest, i.e., the purpose of the harness and lanyard is not to arrest a fall but rather to prevent a fall.

