Aerial and Scissor Lifts – Landscaping Stats and Facts

FACTS

Key hazards associated with the use of lifts in the landscaping industry.

1. **Falls from Height:** Workers on aerial or scissor lifts face a major risk of falling if they aren't properly secured with harnesses or if guardrails are not in place.
2. **Tip-Overs:** These can occur when lifts are used on uneven ground, or exposed to strong winds.
3. **Contact with Power Lines:** Landscapers using lifts near overhead power lines risk electrocution. It's crucial to maintain at least a 10-foot distance from power lines.
4. **Entanglement:** There's a significant danger of workers getting caught in the moving parts of lifts, such as the scissor mechanism or boom, which can lead to crush injuries.
5. **Collisions:** Lifts can collide with nearby structures, vehicles, or other obstacles. Proper site surveys and the use of spotters can mitigate this risk.
6. **Overloading:** Exceeding the weight limits specified for the lift can cause it to tip or fail.
7. **Weather Hazards:** Using lifts in bad weather, such as high winds, rain, or icy conditions, greatly increases the risk of falls, tip-overs, and other accidents.

STATS

- In the construction industry (which includes landscaping), falls from elevated surfaces, including aerial and scissor lifts, account for approximately 25% of all fall-related injuries.
- (OSHA) reports that tip-overs, falls, and electrocutions are among the leading causes of fatalities involving aerial lifts, with falls alone causing nearly 20% of fatal incidents.
- A study by (BLS) showed that between 2011 and 2019, an average of 26 fatalities per year were directly related to aerial and scissor lift use across all industries, with landscaping contributing a significant portion

due to the outdoor and often uneven working conditions.

- For non-fatal injuries, it’s estimated that aerial and scissor lifts contribute to approximately 2,000 injuries annually in the U.S. These injuries often result from falls, being struck by objects, or lift tip-overs.
- In the USA, it is estimated that 300 to 400 workers are injured each year while using aerial or scissor lifts.
- While specific statistics for Canada regarding aerial and scissor lift injuries in landscaping are less commonly reported, the safety concerns and operational risks are similar to those in the USA.