

Elevated Work Platforms: Scissor Lifts, Boom Lifts and Platform Hazards Fatality File



Construction Worker Killed in Scissor Lift Tip-Over (West Palm Beach, FL – June 24, 2024)

Summary of Incident

On the morning of June 24, 2024, a 59-year-old construction worker, John Whiting, was killed on a worksite near 701 Okeechobee Boulevard in West Palm Beach, Florida. According to the West Palm Beach Police Department, Whiting was attempting to drive a scissor lift onto the bed of a flatbed truck when the lift suddenly tipped over and fell on top of him. Officers and emergency responders lifted the platform off the worker, but he was pronounced dead at the scene.

Investigation

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) responded to the scene and opened a workplace fatality investigation into the contractor and the conditions surrounding the load-out operation.

Key Hazards Demonstrated by the Incident

The case illustrates several of the leading causes of scissor lift fatalities documented by NIOSH and the CPWR:

Loading and unloading of self-propelled lifts onto trucks or trailers is one of the highest-risk activities, because the ramp angle, transition lip, and uneven surfaces can shift the center of gravity and cause the unit to tip. NIOSH data show that roughly three-quarters of scissor lift tip-overs result in fall deaths, and that being struck by the falling lift accounts for the remainder – exactly the mechanism in this case. Operating or repositioning a scissor lift on uneven, sloped, or transitional surfaces (such as a truck ramp) without manufacturer-approved procedures is repeatedly cited in OSHA aerial lift fatality investigations.

Source: <https://cbs12.com>