

Elevated Work Platforms: Scissor Lifts, Boom Lifts and Platform Hazards Picture This



This image shows a scissor lift rising inside a warehouse during a routine fixture install. The operator is doing what they do every shift – eyes locked on the light overhead, hand steady on the control. What the operator cannot see is the steel beam crossing the path of travel just behind their head, half-hidden by ductwork and conduit. There is no ground spotter. No one is watching the headroom. For a few seconds, the operator and the beam are converging on the same point in space – and only one of them is moving.

Overhead obstructions do not announce themselves. The beam will not move for a worker focused on the task, and the lift does not stop being dangerous just because the operator has done this job a hundred times. One operator looking up at the work, one beam that was always there, one moment where no one controlled the path of travel – and a routine install becomes a fatality investigation. Survey the entire path before you raise the platform. Identify every overhead obstruction. Keep your head and body clear of the top rail as you ascend. Stop, lower, and reposition rather than reach. The overhead does not forgive complacency.