

Parking Lot Attendant Falls Three Stories Off Manlift

Industry: Parking Lots and Garages

Release Date: January 18, 2011

Task: Parking Vehicles

Occupation: Valet/Lot Attendant

A 22-year-old parking lot attendant fractured three ribs, separated his shoulder, and punctured his lung after falling 30 feet from a manlift.

The victim was using the manlift to descend from the 5th floor of a parking garage. A manlift is a power-driven platform lift used to transport people between floors. Riding the manlift involves stepping onto a 1-2 square foot platform and grabbing a handhold. The manlift moves at approximately 75 feet per minute (less than 1 mile per hour). To get off the lift, a rider steps onto an adjacent platform. The company's training for manlift use normally involves verbal instruction by a supervisor followed by trainees viewing a video demonstrating safe operation of the equipment. In this case, the victim's training consisted of a demonstration of how to ride the lift followed by a ride with the supervisor present. The victim was uncomfortable with using the manlift.



View of manlift coming up to landing

On the day of the incident, the worker's second day on the job, the victim was rushing to return to the main floor to help customers. As the victim stepped onto the lift platform with one foot, the shoelace of his other foot snagged on the metal grate used for the landing surface. The manlift continued to descend while the victim was hanging by his shoelace from the fifth floor. When his shoelace broke, he fell thirty feet to the second floor. The injuries initially added significant personal stress to his life since he needed others to assist him with simple everyday tasks. A year after the incident the victim continues to have leg and back pain; he can no longer participate in sports. His fear of heights has worsened and he is uncomfortable riding in elevators.

Employer Requirements

- Belt manlifts installed between July 1, 2004, and January 1, 2008 must meet American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) A90.1-1997 requirements. All belt manlifts installed after January 1, 2008 must meet ASME A90.1-2003 requirements. See WAC 296-96-11001.
- All belt manlifts must have emergency stop devices that are located within easy reach of the "up" and "down" run of the belt. See WAC 296-96-11066.
- Establish, supervise, and enforce effective rules that lead to a safe and healthy work environment. See WAC 296-800-11035.

Recommendations

- Employees should be physically and mentally able to perform work tasks. If employees are uncomfortable using any equipment or machinery, they should not do so until training or skill issues are addressed.
- Employers should ensure that all employees are trained on how to recognize and minimize hazards associated with any equipment they will be using.
- Employers should strongly consider not using these manlifts due to their inherent hazards.

Resources

- Free workplace safety and health consultations are available from L&I at: www.SafetyConsultants.lni.wa.gov
- See OSHA 1910.68 regarding manlift regulations: <http://1.usa.gov/xsa8YB>
- See ASME A90.1 for an example of a belt manlift maintenance checklist. <http://bit.ly/wUWIK2>

Need more information?

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