

# Tech Tips - a periodic newsletter

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT AERIAL LIFT

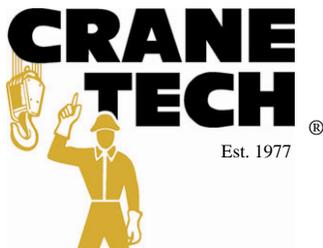
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Because of the many types of elevating aerial lifts available, it's important to choose the right aerial lift for your job.

Start by surveying the jobsite. One of the most important aspects of selecting an aerial platform is to determine the ground the platform will be working on. Is the ground level or rough terrain? You certainly don't want to use a device intended for operating on a hard and flat level surface if the ground is broken or soft. Features such as outriggers and extendible axles can enhance the usefulness and safety of these devices. Is the support surface capable of supporting the weight of an aerial lift device and its working load? Consider the height you will need to reach with your aerial platform. Will you need access over the top of obstructions, or do obstructions require you to set the machine up at some distance from the work?

Maneuverability is very important so that machines can move and turn as needed. Selecting an articulating boom over a straight boom machine may enable faster and safer work without time-consuming machine movement. Choosing the right configuration may not be as simple as knowing how high you'll need to reach, consider issues such as stability, tail-swing, and overall equipment size. Another popular feature is a jib attachment. Jibs add versatility for difficult platform placement. Features such as elevation and side swing from the jib may be just what's needed to get into those hard to reach spaces.

If you're not familiar with the latest features and types of platforms it's a good idea to visit your aerial platform vendor or dealer. Ask for a demonstration of new features. The aerial platform that's just right for your job may not be the platform you are accustomed to using since new features and models come to market frequently. Self-propelled boom supported models are available in heights well in excess of 100 feet in both articulating and straight boom models.

### Tech Tip Continued:

Whatever model you choose make sure your operators are properly trained to operate and to perform frequent inspections on their equipment. Remember, it's not just the length of the boom but also the characteristics of the machine that must be considered. Workers trained on a straight boom device will require additional training to operate a tower boom model even if the boom length is shorter. And, don't forget special attachments and/or configurations.

Make sure operators understand machine set-up, that they're familiar with all limitations, safety devices and operating controls. Most aerial devices have several proximity switches and/or limit devices to prevent operators from operating in a manner not approved by the manufacturer. Operators must understand these safety devices and they must be checked prior to each work shift.

Operators are the first line of defense in accident prevention, and aerial devices bring many other safety concerns into play. Issues such as overhead power lines, fall protection, pinch points, and pedestrian traffic are just a few common associated hazards. And don't forget regulatory requirements. OSHA 29CFR 1910.67 and the ASME A92 series contain specific requirements for aerial lifts. Also check local and state requirements to make sure you comply with all laws.

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