

Safety Note # 17

AUTOMOTIVE LIFT SAFETY



According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, a total of about 15,000 people were treated in hospitals for automotive lift, jack, or jack stand injuries during 2003. Of this total, approximately 5,000 injuries were contusions or abrasions, 2,000 were fractures, and 1,200 were strains and sprains. About 16% of the injuries involved hands and 10% were to heads. California Code of Regulations Title 8, Sections 3541 through 3549 address automotive lifts.

Pre-Use Activities

- Thoroughly review and understand information provided in the automotive lift operator's manual and Automotive Lift Institute safety manual entitled "Lifting It Right."
- Before using, always inspect the automotive lift for malfunctions or disrepair. In addition, assure hydraulic oil levels are at proper levels and check chains, cables, sprockets, and drums for excessive wear, damage, or corrosion.
- If an automotive lift fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the automotive lift from service by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.
- California regulations (Title 8, Section 3543) require automotive lifts to be labeled with information about the manufacturer, lift capacity, and conformance with ANZI standards.

Operating Precautions

- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment, including cap or hard hat, safety glasses, gloves, steel-toed boots, and ear plugs when using excessively noisy tools.
- Never attempt to lift a load that exceeds the rated capacity of the automotive lift.
- Automotive lift controls are designed to return to either the neutral or off position when released by the operator. Never override this safety feature of the controls.
- Never raise a vehicle with a person inside it.
- Position lift supports at recommended locations and raise the vehicle about one foot off the floor. Check the stability of the vehicle by shaking or pushing it gently. If the vehicle is stable, raise it to the working position. Otherwise, lower the vehicle and reposition it.
- Once the vehicle has been raised to its working position, engage the automotive lift load-locking devices. Never stand beneath an automotive lift that does not have the load-locking devices engaged.
- Removal of heavy vehicle components, such as transmissions and differentials, may cause shifts in the vehicle's center of gravity and result in the vehicle becoming unstable and possibly falling. Accordingly, high-reach supplementary stands should be used to assure the stability of the vehicle.
- Before lowering the automotive lift, remove all tools and obstructions from beneath the vehicle.
- Following use of the automotive lift, clean the work area of any trash and spilled fluids.