

FATALITY ALERT

On September 18, 2017, two employees finished repairing the curtain system located near the ceiling of the gymnasium. Slack was observed in the cable associated with a basketball hoop and the employees began preventative maintenance. Employee #1 lowered the scissor lift and drove the lift toward the southwest basketball hoop to get access to the motor and limit switch of basketball hoop. The basketball hoop was raised to a height of approximately 20 feet. The scissor lift was positioned approximately 1 foot away from the southwest corner of the basketball hoop and approximately 2 feet away from the limit switch that needed to be adjusted. With Employee #1 to his right, Employee #2 removed two screws, loosened the limit switch, adjusted it, and then tightened the screws into place. This process took approximately 2 minutes.

Employee #2 took two steps back and Employee #1 begins to lower the scissor lift. Employee #1 exited the scissor lift and walked toward the basketball hoop controls located on the southeast side of the court. Meanwhile, Employee #2 raised the scissor lift into position to hold the limit switch in place. It is unknown if Employee #2 had only raised the scissor lift or changed its position to get better access to the switch.

Employee #1 did not have a line of sight of Employee #2 and the scissor lift platform due to the curtain frame that spans across the middle of the gym. Employee #1 slightly raised the basketball hoop then brought it back down again. Employee #2 called out to raise the basketball hoop up. Employee #1 raised the basketball hoop up again and Employee #2 began to scream. Employee #1 turned around and saw the scissor lift tilting and turns the key to the off position but the scissor lift had tilted too far to try and straighten back up. Employee #1 left the keys to the basketball hoop in the controls and began to run toward Employee #2. The scissor lift struck the ground with Employee #2 in it, causing him to land near center court.

Significant Factors

- Scissor lift was positioned in the path of the basketball hoop which can be lowered and raised
- An employee has to be in the air holding a switch while an employee on the ground operates the basketball hoop to test adjustments
- The employee on the ground could not see the victim and the platform in the air because it was obstructed by a curtain system that runs across the top of the gymnasium

Recommendations

- Brief all employees about the fatality
- Conduct annual inspections of the scissor lift per ANSI/SIA A92.6
- Assess the workplace for hazards that require personal protective equipment
- Ensure that the workplace assessment identifies who conducted it
- Update the exposure control plan annually

- Ensure that all employees with an occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens or other potentially infectious materials that decline a Hepatitis B shot offered to them, sign a declination form.
- Maintain the basketball key controls in good working order
- Ensure employees operating the basketball hoop controls have visual contact with the employee in the lift
- Do not operate the lift in the path of a moving object