

Prevent mobile elevated work platform-related accidents and injuries

Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows a yearly average of 163.2 fatal injuries from ladders since 2016. Contractors who recognize the risk of ladders have pursued alternative solutions. One of the most common solutions is substituting ladders with Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPs).

Choosing to replace ladders with MEWPs can help reduce or eliminate ladder hazards. However, MEWPs are not without their own set of unique hazards, which must be properly identified and controlled.

Selection of the proper MEWPs is a crucial step in the planning process that ensures you have the right equipment for the job. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) classifies MEWPs into Groups and Types: Groups, A and B and Types 1, 2 or 3. Groups are determined depending on where the center of the platform is relative to the machine chassis. Types are determined on how the machine travels.

Safe use planning

The ANSI MEWPs standards adopted by OSHA in 2018 contain new requirements. Key components of the standards have been summarized below to assist you in creating or updating a “Safe Use Plan”.

Before operating a MEWP, a safe use program specific to the piece of equipment shall be developed. According to ANSI/SAIA A92.22-2021, the safe use program shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Perform a site risk assessment to identify hazards, evaluate risk, develop control measures, and communicate with affected person
- Selection, provision and use of suitable MEWP and associated work equipment
- Access, preparation, and maintenance of the site, as required, to include and assessment that the support surface is adequate to support the weight of the MEWP
- MEWP maintenance including inspection(s) and repairs as required by the most recent update of ANSI/SAIA A92.22 and by the manufacturer



- Only trained and authorized personnel are allowed to operate and/or occupy the MEWP
- Familiarization of authorized MEWP operator(s) with the specific MEWP to be used
- Inform the operator of local site requirements and warn and provide the means to protect against identified hazards in the areas where the MEWP will be operated
- Have trained and qualified supervisor(s) to monitor the performance of the work of the operator to ensure compliance with provisions of the most recent update of ANSI/SAIA A92.22
- Prevention of unauthorized use of the MEWP
- Safety of persons not involved in the operation of the MEWP
- Documentation required in Record Retention clause of the most recent update of ANSI/SAIA A92.22

Stages of risk assessment

1. Identify the task to be undertaken
2. Select an appropriate MEWP
3. Assess the risks associated with the task
4. Identify control measures
5. Identify safe work procedures
6. Rescue from height

MEWP personnel qualifications and training requirements

Before using MEWPs, personnel must be trained on inspections, application, hazards, and operation of MEWPs. With the update, users, supervisors, operators, and occupants must receive training. Trainees must complete both types of training. The required types of training include Contents of Theory Training; that can be completed in a classroom or online and hands-on Contents of Practical Training. Both trainings have specific requirements found in ANSI/SAIA A92.24, which also provides examples of a knowledge evaluation sheet, practical knowledge evaluation test, training certificates, and authorization to operate form.

Workplace inspection

MEWP users must inspect the workplace for hazards before and during use of the equipment. Common workplace hazards include:

- Power lines
- Working at heights
- Overhead obstructions
- Drop-offs or holes
- Inadequate surface for equipment weight
- Wind and weather conditions
- Other equipment or contractors in work area
- Vehicle traffic



Resources

- [OSHA eTool](#)
- ANSI/SAIA A92.22-2021-Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPS)-Safe Use-4.2 Safe Use Planning
- ANSI/SAIA A92.22-2021-Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPS)-Safe Use-6.1 Risk Assessment
- ANSI/SAIA A92.24-2018-Training Requirements for the Use, Operations, Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Mobile Elevated Work Platforms



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