

MEWP RESCUE PROCEDURES TOOLBOX TALK

WHY DO YOU NEED RESCUE PROCEDURES?

A robust, documented rescue procedure is required to lower the Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) platform occupants in case of a malfunction or emergency. These may be caused by:

- MEWP stopped due to no fuel or low battery.
- MEWP malfunction.
- Trapped platform or MEWP upper structure.
- Platform overload.
- Operator/occupant distress (health issues, entrapment, electrocution, etc.).
- Other emergencies.

Any delay in rescuing the MEWP platform occupants may be the difference between life and death.

WHAT IS REQUIRED?

Your employer must provide you with a documented rescue plan BEFORE you elevate. The rescue plan must identify how the MEWP will be returned to ground level or a safe area, in case of an incident at height. The Rescue Plan should also identify who is (are) the Nominated Ground Rescue Person(s).

Note: Some MEWPs may require more than one physically fit person to operate the auxiliary/emergency descent system.

The operator should test the functionality of the ground and the auxiliary/emergency lowering systems during the pre-use inspection.

The Nominated Ground Rescue Person(s) should: be available and at ground level when the MEWP is in use; be familiarised with the MEWP's ground and auxiliary/emergency controls; practice the rescue procedures through rescue drills; have a method of communication with the MEWP operator and platform occupants.

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

This Toolbox talk applies to:

- MEWP User (who has control of the use of the MEWP on site)
- Supervisor/Site Manager
- Nominated Ground Rescue Person(s)
- MEWP Operator

WHAT SHOULD THE MEWP USER DO?

- Identify and train and familiarise your nominated ground rescue person(s).
- MEWP manufacturers have different procedures to lower the platform from the ground and auxiliary/emergency controls.
- Only allow the MEWP to be operated after a documented rescue plan is in place and practiced.
- Brief operators to position the MEWP such that the ground control and any rescue control panel are fully accessible to the Nominated Ground Rescue Person(s).

WHAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN NOMINATING GROUND RESCUE PERSON(S)?

- They understand the site constraints and hazards when operating the ground and auxiliary/emergency lowering systems.
- They know the manufacturer's instructions to safely control the MEWP platform to a safe rescue position.
- Perform regular rescue drills to avoid panic.

REMEMBER

After a rescue it is recommended practice to:

- Isolate the machine (remove the keys).
- Tag the machine.
- Report the incident to the user.
- Investigate the cause of why a rescue was required.



USEFUL REFERENCES

- IPAF MEWP Operator's Safety Guide
- Manufacturer's Operation Manuals and MEWP lowering labels
- Andy Access posters (available at www.ipaf.org/andyaccess)
- IPAF Rescue Plan and Pre-use inspection Toolbox Talks (available at www.ipaf.org/resources)
- CIPSG Guidance on reducing trapping and crushing injuries to MEWP platform occupants