



SAFETY ALERT #31



May 31, 2008

In the interest of keeping everyone safe CAMSAFETY will be sharing injury information with preliminary root cause analysis. This information is intended to make you think not assess blame. If you have an incident that you would like to share send us the information and we will pass it along.

COLLAPSABLE GUARDRAIL ON SCISSOR LIFT COLLAPSES

What Happened

Workers were using a 3'9" x 32' scissor lift with collapsible guardrail. When the worker, who was tied off with a harness/PFAS, had the lift raised and in position to perform his work he stepped up onto the guardrail. When he did this the guardrail gave way beneath him once he attempted to put his weight on the rail. The worker maintained his footing and did not fall from the platform. There were no pin stops on the collapsible guardrails on the platform of the lift. The worker notified his supervisor and the lift was immediately taken out of service. The lift rental company was notified and the lift replaced. The workers found one pin on the floor and could not find any other pins.

Prevention:

Several things jump out from what fortunately a near-*hit* (although he did not fall he could have *hit* the floor had he not been tied off). A worker is not required to be tied off in a scissor lift that has a compliant guardrail on all four sides so he was fortunate in that regard. There are two very important issues to discuss here.

First is the pre-use inspection:

R 408.43208. Preoperational procedures. Rule 3208. (1) *An operator shall inspect an aerial work platform for defects that would affect its safe operation and use before it is used on each work shift. The visual inspection shall consist of all of the following procedures:*

The investigation determined that when the lift left the Rental Company it had been inspected and the pins for the collapsible railings were in place. While on site it is suspected that someone removed the pins to collapse the railings, to move it into an area that would limit access if railings were in the up position. These pins were not properly reinstalled on the lift. The workers using the lift failed to inspect the equipment.

Secondly, what was he doing stepping up onto the guardrail?

R 408.43216. Operating procedures. Rule 3216 (6) *The guardrail system of the platform shall not be used to support any of the following:*

- (a) *Materials.*
- (b) *Other work platforms.*
- (c) *Employees.*

(7) *Employees shall maintain firm footing on the platform while working on the platform. The use of railings, planks, ladders, or any other devices on the platform for achieving additional height is prohibited.*

This whole incident could have been avoided with a little preplanning; do we have the right lift – is it high enough AND let's pull out the owner's manual and do a quick pre-use inspection. Additionally, it would be easy to write this incident off because no one was injured but it is a freeby of sorts. You can learn a lot from it but no one got hurt.