



# City Safe

A Guide To Assist In Training  
Employees About:

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## ***BUCKET/AERIAL TRUCK SAFETY***

Number 23

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*City Safe is a publication of the League of Kansas Municipalities and the Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust for the purpose of educating and informing cities about loss control methods and risk management. Contents herein are not intended to provide specific legal or medical advice. Readers should seek advice on specific concerns from a qualified professional.*

*Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust  
300 SW 8th Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66603  
Phone: (785) 354-9565  
Fax: (785) 354-4186  
[wflowers@lkm.org](mailto:wflowers@lkm.org)*

We are all aware of the wide variety of projects that cities are performed by our city staffs each day. Because these tasks are so diverse and unique, cities utilize a wide variety of tools and equipment to aid them in completing these jobs. A bucket or aerial truck is one piece of equipment that can be used in a



variety of ways to perform a variety of functions. Because bucket trucks are so adaptable, there is an increased risk of injury to those who operate them. Also, because these trucks provide a greater exposure to workers, cities should provide some sort of formal training to their operators. In addition to that training, the tips below are some good things to keep in mind next time you work in the bucket truck.

### **Pre-Operation**

- Start truck and listen for unusual sounds
- Check all lift controls to ensure proper functioning
- Check hydraulic lines and fittings
- Check tires, brakes, and steering
- Check for leaks, loose wiring, hoses, and belts
- Check boom and accessories for cracks or abnormal wear

## Worksite Inspection

- Try not to park on uneven ground
- Keep an eye out for drop-offs, holes, bumps, and debris
- Do not operate the boom if wind gusts exceed 30 mph or if there is a threat of an electrical storm
- Set emergency brake
- Position wheel chocks
- Check for overhead obstructions

## Potential Hazards and How To Prevent Them

### Falls

- Always keep feet on floor of bucket
- Do not sit, stand, or climb on the edge of the basket
- Do not place any item in the bucket for the purpose of increasing work height (ladders, step stools, etc.)



- Do not try to climb down from the bucket when it is raised
- Make sure bucket floor is clear of debris
- ALWAYS WEAR FALL PROTECTIONS!

### Tip Over

- Do not push or pull toward anything while raised in the bucket
- Do not carry ladders, etc. in the bucket
- Do not exceed the 300 lb. capacity
- Do not move the truck when the bucket is raised

- Do not operate in high winds
- Make sure the outriggers are positioned properly

- Never use the bucket as a crane

### Electrocution

- Maintain safe clearances from power lines and electrical apparatus
- No aerial platform, insulated or not, provides any electrical protection to the occupant if there is phase-to-phase or phase-to-ground contact

### General Use Tips

- Never leave the truck unattended unless the key is taken out and truck is secured from unauthorized users
- When driving, watch for overhead obstructions
- Travel slow on bumpy or sloped ground

Obviously some of these tips are just plain common sense, but because of the heights at which these bucket trucks put workers, we must all do what we can to keep safety on the minds of our workers.

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## 7/10ths OF A SECOND

Have you ever considered how fast a car accident can happen? Within less than one second, your vehicle can be totally destroyed and without a seat belt to restrain you, your body is subject to the force of the collision. Below is a description of what happens in the first seven-tenths of a second when an automobile traveling 55 mph hits a solid object and the driver is not wearing his/her seat belt and shoulder belt.

This description is somewhat graphic, but is a true description of what you are exposed to when you fail to wear your seat belt.



In the *first tenth of a second*, the front bumper and grille collapse.

In the *second tenth of a second*, the hood crumples, raises, and strikes the windshield while the rear wheels are lofted from the ground, still spinning at 55 mph. Simultaneously, the fenders begin wrapping themselves around the object that was just struck by the car. The frame of the car has stopped moving, but the rest of the car is still traveling 55 mph. The driver instinctively stiffens his legs against the crash and they snap at the knee joint.



During the *third tenth of a second*, the steering wheel starts to disintegrate in the driver's hands and the steering column is aimed at the driver's chest.

The *fourth tenth of a second* finds the first two feet of the car's front end wrecked, the rear moving at 35 mph, but the driver's body still traveling at 55 mph.

In the *fifth tenth of a second* (a "split second"), the driver is impaled on the steering column and his lungs begin to fill with blood.

In the *sixth tenth of a second*, the driver's feet are ripped out of his shoes, the brake pedal snaps off and the car frame buckles in the middle. The driver's head smashes into and through the windshield as the rear wheels fall back to earth.

In the *seventh tenth of a second*, doors fly open, hinges rip loose, and the seats break free, striking the driver from behind. The driver does not feel the seat striking him, because he is already *dead!*

A lot has happened in less than one second. Think about how long one second is the next time you decide not to wear a seat belt.

Of course, there are a lot of circumstances that could change the result of the incident described above. However, there is no doubt that when you don't wear your seat belt, you are at a far greater risk of injury if you are involved in an accident. You should remember this next time you get into a vehicle.

**Source:** [www.toolboxtopics.com](http://www.toolboxtopics.com)

We are always looking for new ideas or topics for City Safe. If you have a topic you would like to see covered in an upcoming edition, please contact Mark Morris at [mmorris@lkm.org](mailto:mmorris@lkm.org) or by phone at (785) 354-9565. We are also looking for knowledgeable authors who would like to write an article about a timely issue concerning safety in your city.

# *Safe-T-Tips*

## **COUNTERING RESISTANCE TO SAFETY CHANGES**

Want to stop the inevitable complaining next time you announce a safety change? Tell people you want them to try the new method for two weeks and then discuss how it went. People will be less likely to resist if they don't feel like something is being forced on them. Even better, they may give you feedback to make things run smoother.

### **Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust**

300 SW 8th Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66603