Bucket Truck Safety for Municipalities Fatality File



Municipal Electrician Dies after Falling out of an Aerial Lift Truck's Raised Bucket after It Was Struck by a Semi-Tractor Trailer – Massachusetts

A 63-year-old male municipal signal operator/electrician (victim) was fatally injured when he fell out of a vehicle-mounted aerial lift's raised bucket. The victim and one coworker were at a four-way intersection replacing a traffic signal bulb. The victim was inside the raised bucket accessing the cantilevered traffic signal when a tractor-trailer driving through the intersection struck the raised bucket. The victim was ejected out of the bucket and fell approximately 17 feet to the roadway below. A call was placed for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) by the driver of the tractor-trailer. Within minutes EMS and the local police arrived at the incident location and the victim was transported to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Contributing factors identified in this investigation included: no fall protection used when working from a raised aerial lift bucket; positioning of the aerial lift truck that allowed vehicles to pass under the raised bucket; and improper work zone set up including inadequate quantity and positioning of temporary traffic control devices.

The Massachusetts FACE Program concluded that to prevent similar occurrences in the future, municipalities should:

- Provide and ensure that fall protection is used when working from an aerial lift truck's raised bucket/platform;
- Ensure that when performing work in roadways that work zones are set up, at a minimum, in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), Part 6, developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal
- Ensure that employees' exposure to moving traffic is minimized when working in and around roadways by developing temporary traffic control plans, which never allow traffic to pass underneath raised aerial lift buckets/platforms;
- Provide and ensure that employees working along roadways wear the appropriate
- Provide work zone safety training for all employees who will be required to complete tasks while in proximity to roadways.