



## Struck By & Caught Between Training

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**Division --** Portland

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**Job Name --** BPA VCC

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### Comments:

Let's talk is about two hazards that can take you out of the game fast: :Struck-by: (getting hit by vehicles, equipment, or falling objects) and :Caught-between: (being crushed, pinned, or trapped between objects or machinery). We'll also touch on mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs), because those are everywhere on site and bring their own struck-by/Caught-between risks.

**Struck-by incidents are the 2nd leading cause of death** in construction and the leading cause of non-fatal injuries in the trades. About **half of struck-by fatalities** are struck by vehicles on site.

**Caught-in/caught-between** events are less common than falls but still deadly : they're part of OSHA's :Focus Four: and account for a meaningful share of construction deaths and serious injuries.

For MEWPs (aerial lifts/boom lifts/scissor lifts): historically the industry averages **roughly 20:30 fatalities a year** related to aerial lifts in worldwide/U.S. studies, and MEWPs are involved in serious struck-by and tip-over events when used improperly. Treat them like any heavy equipment : they can injure people on the ground and the platform occupants.

## **Let's talk about real-life scenarios**

:Who's worked around excavators, dump trucks, or MEWP's this week::

:Okay, imagine a lift operator swings a boom while someone is stepping behind the machine. Or a platform operator drops a wrench, and it hits the person below. Or a worker gets pinned between a trailer and a compacting plate, those moments happen in seconds.:

Most struck-by / caught-between incidents are avoidable with planning, communication, and simple controls.

## **Common ways these incidents happen**

Ground workers are struck by reversing vehicles or equipment (with no spotters, and blind spots).

Workers are struck by falling tools and materials from MEWP platforms.

Being caught between a moving piece of equipment and a fixed object (or a trench wall collapse).

Getting pulled into rotating machinery or compressed between objects during material handling.

## **Controls that work (what we can do on site)**

### **Plan & separate**

Set up vehicle and equipment travel routes and **pedestrian exclusion zones**. Keep foot traffic out of equipment corridors. Use cones, barriers, and signage.

### **Use a spotter & positive communication**

Every time a vehicle reverses or a lift is positioned near people, a trained spotter communicates with the operator (radio/hand signals). No spotter = no movement.

### **Establish overhead work protocols for MEWPs**

Tools tethered to the platform, toe boards/mesh where possible, and a controlled access zone (CAZ) under the platform. Wear appropriate fall protection and be trained on the specific MEWP type.

### **PPE is last line of defense**

Hard hats, hi-vis, safety boots, hand and eye protection, but PPE doesn't replace planning and controls.

### **MEWP-specific reminders**

Only trained, authorized operators may operate a MEWP.

Perform and document a pre-use inspection, every shift.

Never overload the platform or use ladders/boxes on a platform. Tools and materials must be secure.

Be aware of swing radius, pinch points, and the possibility of a platform hitting ground workers. Keep the area below clear.

### **What to do if you see a hazard**

**Stop work** if someone is in immediate danger.

Control traffic or movement (ask operator to stop).

Report to your supervisor immediately and complete a near-miss/incident report so we can fix the root cause.

Name one potential struck-by or caught-between hazards you see on site and one action we'll take to control it.

### **Remember This!**

Statistics we talk about are not just numbers; they're people like us. A small action like using a spotter, or clearing the ground under a lift, or securing a tool can prevent a life-changing injury.