

Toolbox Talks

JACK SAFETY



A variety of jacks are used in municipal operations, primarily but not only, in public works operations and in fleet garages. Workers are sometimes injured because they did not use the jack correctly or did not use the right jack for the job. The most common hazard associated with jack use is collapse from: trying to lift beyond the capacity of the jack; jack placement on uneven surfaces; and the load slipping off the jack.

To operate a jack safely, follow these simple, basic rules:

1. Use a jack with a rated capacity that exceeds the load you're lifting. The jack should have a capacity plate or other markings providing lifting capacity information.
2. Inspect the jack before and after each use. Do not use a jack that is defective. Any sign of hydraulic fluid leakage is sufficient reason to remove the jack from use.
3. Always set the jack on a firm and level foundation. When necessary to provide a firm foundation, the base of the jack should be blocked or cribbed. To avoid slippage of the metal cap of the jack place a wooden block between the jack head and the contact surface of the load.
4. When jacking from a floor, make sure that the load limit of the floor isn't exceeded.
5. All lifts should be vertical with the jack perpendicular, at a right angle to the load.
6. Before working under a raised load, install jack stands or blocking to keep the load from accidentally falling.
7. Keep jacks lubricated at regular intervals. Hydraulic jacks exposed to freezing temperatures shall be supplied with an adequate antifreeze liquid. Always follow the manufacturer's specifications for inspection, operation, and maintenance.
8. Inspection of jacks is required at frequencies based on service conditions. Inspections should be made AT LEAST as follows:
 - a) For constant or intermittent use at one locality, inspect once every 6 months.
 - b) For jacks sent out of the shop for special work, inspect when sent out and when returned. If used in the field, inspect before and after each use.
 - c) For a jack submitted to abnormal load or shock, inspect immediately before and immediately thereafter.

*Jacks that are out-of-order shall be tagged accordingly and shall not be used until repairs are made.

NOTE: Use of jacks must comply with OSHA 29CFR 1926.305, Jacks-Lever and Ratchet, Screw and Hydraulic.

