



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



Question & Answer

Q: It's a common issue, so why doesn't OSHA provide any guidance about setting up bucket trucks on slopes?

A: The reason OSHA doesn't provide specific guidance on setting up bucket trucks on slopes is because they typically don't dictate how tasks should be performed. While recent rule-making has moved toward some procedural expectations, OSHA's regulations historically focus on defining what employers must accomplish, rather than how tasks should be executed.

Under the General Duty Clause, when there's no specific rule, employers are required to ensure that equipment is operated safely in all foreseeable workplace conditions. To do this, the employer should refer to the manufacturer for guidance on safe operation.

OSHA often refers to the manufacturer's design specifications when it comes to equipment usage. In any incident involving equipment, OSHA compliance officers will first turn to the manufacturer's instructions. While employers may have engineers who assess safety, the policy for setting up equipment must always align with the manufacturer's operator manual, which will detail the maximum safe slope angle and the recommended orientation of the vehicle relative to the slope.