

HAZARD ALERT

BOTTLE JACK OPERATORS MUST BE COMPETENT

A garage attendant was working alone on a vehicle and used a bottle jack positioned under the axle frame at each end near the spring to remove the tires. To reinstall the tires, the jack had to be raised slightly to align the bolts, so the worker crawled under to insert another jack. The jack slipped out, allowing the front weight of the truck to shift and come down on him.

Bottle jacks are important in garages, public works operations and in other municipal operations. Workers can be seriously injured or killed if they fail to use the jack correctly or use the proper jack. The following safety tips are intended to prevent accidents associated with the use of bottle jacks:

Recommended Preventive Action

- Employers must provide bottle jack operators with proper training before authorizing them to operate lifting equipment.
- Operators must study, understand, and follow all instructions before using a bottle jack, and know how the controls operate.
- Always follow the manufacturer's specifications for inspection and maintenance.
- Visually inspect the jack before each use by checking for abnormal conditions such as cracked welds, leaks, and damaged, loose or missing parts.
- Bottle jacks must be lubricated regularly. Hydraulic jacks exposed to freezing temperatures must be supplied with an adequate antifreeze liquid.
- Do not use a jack that is damaged, worn or operates abnormally. Any sign of hydraulic fluid leakage is sufficient reason to remove the jack from use.
- Know the maximum weight capacities and do not exceed them.
- Lift only on areas of the vehicle as specified by the vehicle manufacturer.
- Check the lifting points and the lift adapters for damage or corrosion that may affect the support of the vehicle, and for wet, oily, or slick surfaces that may cause slippage.
- Use only on hard, level surfaces. When necessary to provide a firm foundation, the base of the jack should be blocked or cribbed. To avoid slippage of the jack's metal cap, place a wooden block between the jack and the load's contact surface.
- All projects that require the raising of a vehicle or mobile equipment by jacks must use two forms of support at all times. Secondary supports shall be installed at the same time and concurrently with the raising of the load.
- Always chock the wheels and use the appropriate jack stands to properly support the vehicle before getting underneath or working around the raised vehicle. Wood blocks, bricks, or concrete blocks are not acceptable substitutes for chocks.

