Vehicles Fall From Jacks



Would you trust your life to a hydraulic jack?

You shouldn’t.

Workers have been killed by vehicles and other heavy objects falling off jacks and improperly-placed jack stands.

In one such fatality, a mechanic was doing a repair under a forklift supported only by a hydraulic jack and one wheel chock. He did not use jack stands, wood blocks or any other rigid stable form of support for the forklift. The area of the shop yard where he was working was on a slight slope. He was on a creeper underneath the forklift when the heavy machine slipped. The forklift frame struck him in the head.

In a similar case, a mechanic died when a bus fell off a pair of jack stands, crushing him to death. He had jacked the bus up with lifts cradling each rear tire. He then placed jack stands underneath the rear suspension. The jack stands were not of an approved safe design and the front tires had not been chocked.

After the mechanic started to do a brake job, the bus crashed to the floor, crushing him under the rear axle.

You are not safe underneath vehicles supported only by a jack. A jack should be used to lift the vehicle enough that additional support can be positioned. Chocks don’t guarantee the vehicle won’t move. They should be placed on both sides of the wheel diagonally opposite of where the jack is placed. Such work should be done on level surfaces, with approved jack stands and other adequate support.

This safety information is important in the plant workshop and wherever heavy loads are manipulated. Workers have been crushed by poorly-supported trailers, portable storage sheds and other heavy objects slipping and tipping over.