

Inspecting Personnel Elevators

Constant attention will help avoid accidents, work stoppages

by Eric Schmidt, P.E.

It is one of the basic tenets of the equipment business, “Proper maintenance and inspection of construction equipment is necessary for extending service life and providing reliable operation.”

But the safety of the project will also be significantly improved when the correct procedures are followed. A few key steps made on a routine basis may be all that stands between a successful job and a preventable accident. Personnel elevators, or construction elevators, provide highly valued service when operating in the rigorous environments of a bustling construction site, whether it is new construction or renovation of a commercial building, or the heavy work required within the industrial sector. But when you are moving people and materials on a building or structure that may be constantly changing, simply by virtue of the fact that there is a project underway, there will always be the potential for risks and hazards around equipment that is traveling so close to the work. Constant attention to some basic facts will go a long way toward avoiding an accident, and the multitude of negative effects that inevitably arise from such an incident.



Personnel elevators are typically one of the critical systems necessary to the success of a project, servicing many trade crews by becoming the highway that connects the inside of the building to the outside world. Staying on schedule is almost impossible when the elevator is not operating. Maintaining the reliability of these workhorses may rest in large part to the attention that is given on daily, weekly and monthly intervals.

The Construction Hoist Council of the SIA has put together a basic checklist for inspection and regular maintenance of a personnel elevator. The list is intended to address the typical hazards and requirements of most types of equipment operating in North America. All of the items will not apply to every model of elevator or every installation, but the list is meant to provide some common principles to assist users, field personnel, equipment providers and others when needed. Additional items may be required by some manufacturers or when using a specific model of elevator.

Daily inspections are normally performed by an operator or supervisor trained on the equipment being used. The monthly inspections are typically accomplished by a trained equipment technician and provide a more thorough examination and testing of the components.