

THE AUTO DEALER'S ORIGINAL FIXED OPERATIONS RESOURCE

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# FIXED OPS



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# LIFT SAFETY AND YOUR DEALERSHIP'S BUSINESS

## BEST PRACTICES FOR ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR LIFT EQUIPMENT

BY R.W. "BOB" O'GORMAN

Vehicle lifts are the most frequently used pieces of equipment in the Service Department.

Think about it: just about every vehicle maintenance and repair job is easier when performed on a lift. That's why it's so important that you choose new lifts with care, that you ensure that they're properly installed and maintained and that you train your Technicians how to use them safely.

This article addresses best practices for lift selection, installation, operation and maintenance.

### Lift Selection

There are a number of factors to consider when choosing new vehicle lifts, including:

- What type of vehicles will you be lifting? The answer to this question will affect lift type, lift capacity, adapters and other accessories.
- How much space do you have? Some OEMs set minimum bay sizes. And some lifts require more space than others.
- What types of services will a particular lift be used for? You may want one type of lift for your express Service bays and another type for general Service. Specialized tasks may be best suited to a different lift, as well.

- What types of lifts can the facility support? Some facilities may have limitations on which lifts can be installed because of soil or foundation issues, ceiling height limits, groundwater levels or other site-specific considerations.

Once you've identified the appropriate type of lift or lifts for your dealership, the next step is to make sure the ones you are considering have been third-party tested and certified to meet the industry safety and performance standard, ANSI/ALI ALCTV-2011. This standard outlines requirements for lift construction, testing and validation. The International Building Code (IBC) requires that any vehicle lift installed within an adopting jurisdiction must be certified.

Because the IBC is in use or has been adopted by all 50 U.S. states, in the simplest of terms, that means those responsible for any lift installed in the U.S. or in any U.S. territory must be sure the lift is certified.

**IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU CHOOSE NEW LIFTS WITH CARE, THAT YOU ENSURE THAT THEY'RE PROPERLY INSTALLED AND MAINTAINED AND THAT YOU TRAIN YOUR TECHNICIANS HOW TO USE THEM SAFELY.**

## CERTIFIED AUTOMOTIVE LIFT



**ALI CERTIFIED**

To the provisions of  
**ANSI/ALI ALCTV-2017**  
SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR  
CONSTRUCTION, TESTING  
AND VALIDATION

**Automotive Lift Institute**  
ANSI Accredited Certification Program | Accreditation Number 0584

Certification Label Serial Number

What's a certified lift? The ANSI/ALI ALCTV-2011 standard outlines all the requirements for a lift to be certified by ALI. A key requirement is that the lift has to have been tested by one of three independent, OSHA-accredited Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratories.

This testing includes listing of the electrical system and validation of the structural integrity of all the lift's systems and components, proper function of its controls and load-holding devices, proper lowering speeds and mechanical overload protection.

Part of the testing process involves loading a lift to 150 percent of its rated load capacity and ensuring that no visual deformation of its structural elements or components occurs. (Note that although certified lifts are tested beyond their rated capacities, they should never be overloaded in practice.) The lift's instructional materials and the lift manufacturer's production facility also must meet requirements outlined in the standard.

Lifts that are tested by one of the approved laboratories and found to meet all of the requirements outlined in the current edition of the ANSI/ALI ALCTV standard receive a gold ALI-certified label. ALI's gold label is the only industry-recognized documentation that a specific lift model has been third-party tested and certified to meet the industry's safety and performance standards.

All ALI-certified lifts are listed online at [www.autolift.org/ali-directory-of-certified-lifts](http://www.autolift.org/ali-directory-of-certified-lifts). If a lift is not listed on this website, it's not certified and should not be purchased or installed. Not all lifts for sale in today's market are certified, regardless of country of origin. The burden of purchasing and installing certified lifts rests with you, the dealership lift decision-maker.

#### Lift Installation

Once you've selected your lift, be sure it's properly commissioned and installed. ANSI/ALI ALIS 2009 (R2015) is the national standard covering safety requirements for vehicle lift installation

and service. Make sure your lift installer follows the lift manufacturer's directions for installing your lift, including using the specific anchors recommended by the manufacturer.

**LIFTS THAT ARE TESTED BY ONE OF THE APPROVED LABORATORIES AND FOUND TO MEET ALL OF THE REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED IN THE CURRENT EDITION OF THE ANSI/ALI ALCTV STANDARD RECEIVE A GOLD ALI-CERTIFIED LABEL.**

For inground lifts, your lift manufacturer's representative should check your foundation and soil conditions prior to installation.

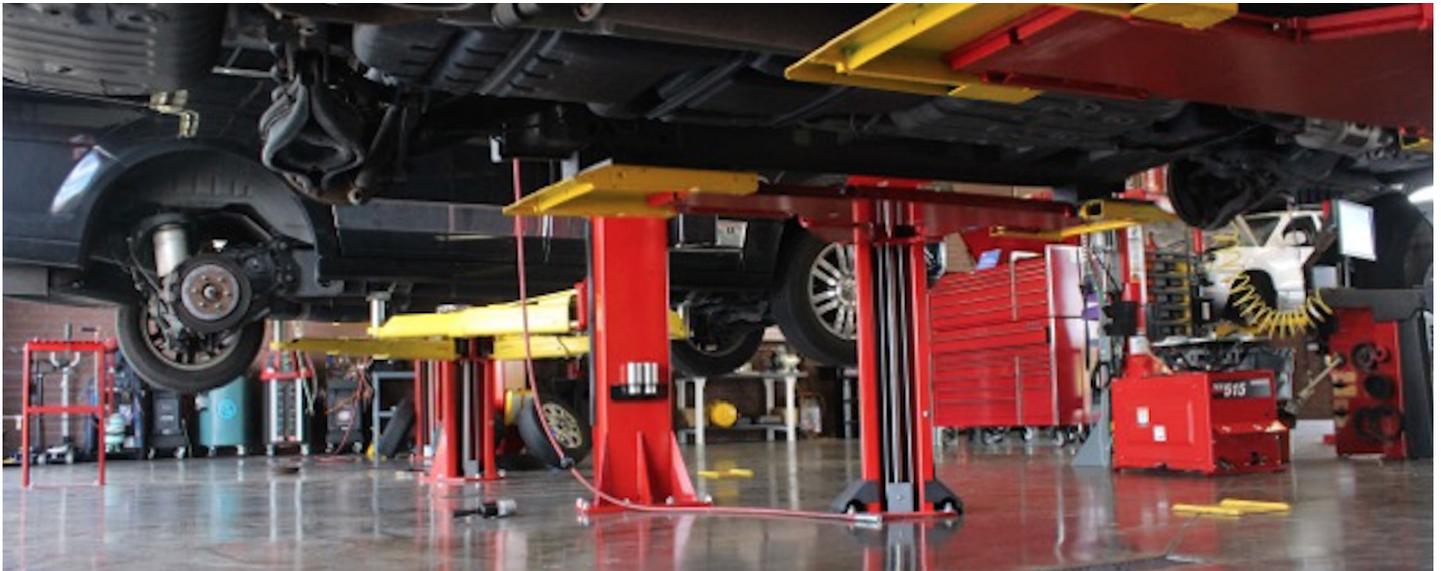


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### Lift Operation

Many experienced Technicians believe they know how to get any vehicle onto a lift and that spotting is just common sense.

This is a dangerous attitude. Lifting is not the same for all vehicles, nor for all lifts. A vehicle that isn't properly spotted on the lift can fall off, damaging the vehicle and potentially injuring the Technician.

Every Technician in the Service Department should be trained on the proper use of the lifts in the shop. This training should include how to choose the right lift for a particular vehicle and job, how to properly spot vehicles on the lifts in your shop and how to determine what other equipment (such as vehicle support stands) might be needed.

Talk to your lift installer about training your Technicians on the proper use and care of the lifts installed in your shop. Be sure to provide your Technicians with copies of ALI's annual "Quick Reference Guide: Vehicle Lifting Points for Frame Engaging Lifts," a booklet that shows the OEM-recommended pickup points for domestic and imported cars and light trucks from model year 1991 to present.

ALI provides a convenient resource for general vehicle lift safety training with its online course, *Lifting It Right*. This

interactive, web-based training course guides trainees through lift types, the lifting and lowering process and lift maintenance.

At the conclusion of the program, a certificate of completion is generated and

stored online for those who pass the test. This gives you peace of mind that if a safety inspector visits your Service Department, you can quickly and easily demonstrate that your Technicians have been trained.



## Online Certificate Course **LIFTING IT RIGHT**



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### Lift Maintenance

Follow the recommendation of your lifts manufacturer(s) to establish and follow a planned maintenance procedure in order to ensure reliability and allow the continued safe operation of the lifts.

This procedure should outline what's inspected as part of the planned maintenance program, frequency of inspections and documentation of all maintenance. ANSI/ALI ALOIM: 2008 (R2013) is the national standard covering lift operation, inspection and maintenance.

One of the requirements in the standard is that Technicians perform a 10-point inspection of their lifts every day to check that:

1. All lift operating procedures, safety tips and generic safety materials are accessible and readable.
2. All warning labels are accessible and readable.
3. The lift's rated load capacity is visible.

4. All lift controls are operating properly, including synchronizing systems, restraints and locking devices.

5. Is there any deformation or excessive wear of any structural components?

6. Is there any deformation or excessive wear of non-structural components, such as hoses, wires or drive chains?

7. Is there any damage or excessive wear to any lift contact points?

8. Is there any evidence of hydraulic or pneumatic leaks?

9. Have there been any unusual noises, sudden movements, erratic operation or evidence of chips or filings during use?

10. Are there any cracks or loose concrete around floor anchor bolts (if applicable)?

If any of these issues are identified, the lift operator should immediately stop using the lift and report the situation to

the supervisor. The lift should be locked or tagged as "out-of-service" until the problem is resolved.

## ONE OF THE REQUIREMENTS IN THE STANDARD IS THAT TECHNICIANS PERFORM A 10-POINT INSPECTION OF THEIR LIFTS EVERY DAY.

Always follow the lift manufacturer's recommendations for maintaining and repairing a lift. Never modify or reconstruct a lift without the manufacturer's express written permission. And always replace worn, damaged or broken parts with parts approved by the original equipment manufacturer.



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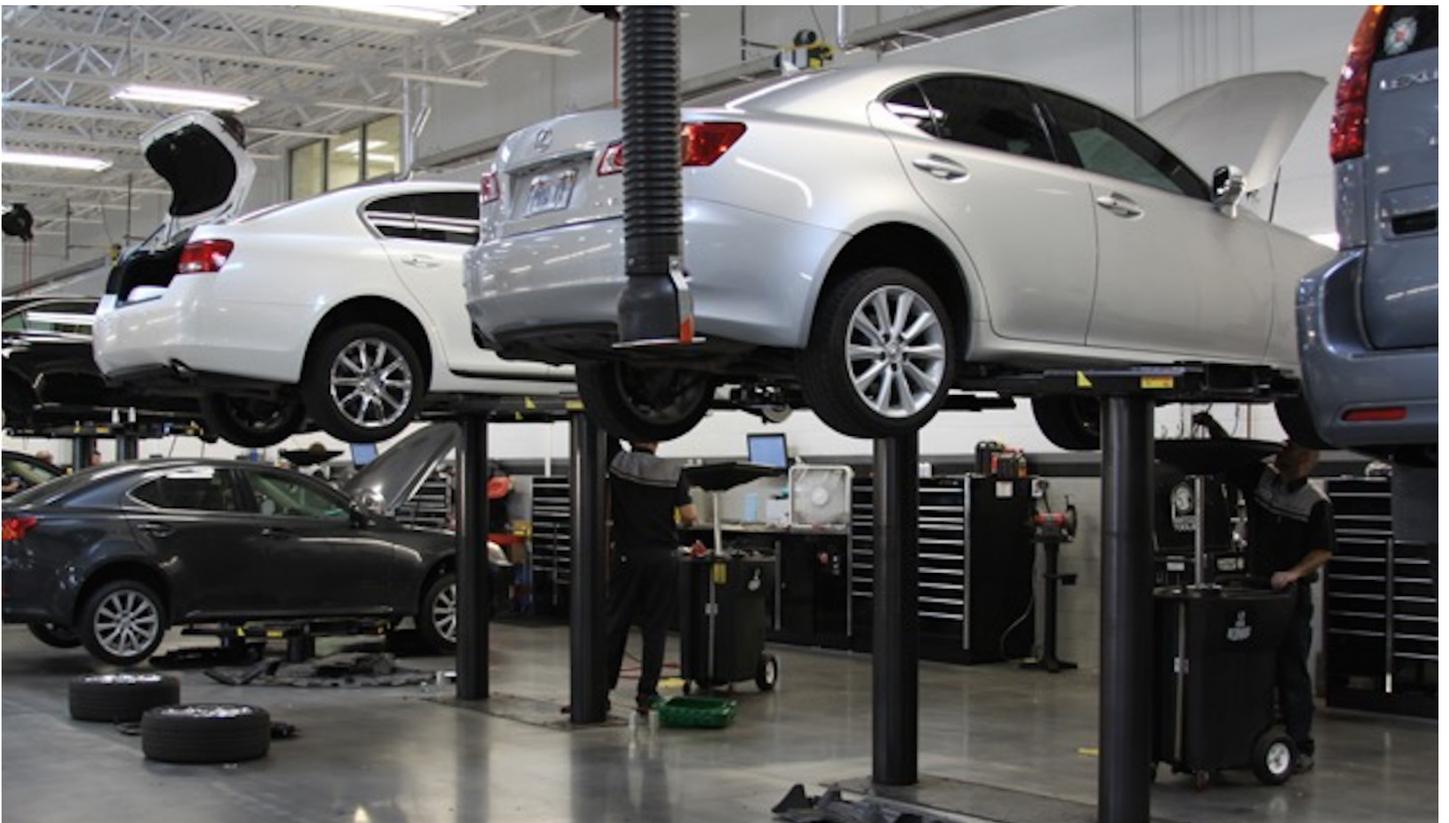
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## Lift Inspection

In addition to daily inspections performed by the lift operator, ANSI/ALI ALOIM also requires that a qualified lift inspector inspect every installed lift at least annually. (More frequently if required by the lift manufacturer.)

ALI's Lift Inspector Certification Program makes it easier for Fixed Ops Managers to find local qualified lift inspectors. The ALI Lift Inspector Certification Program provides participating lift inspectors with extensive training materials and workshops. Participants must pass a written pre-course exam and final course exam, as well as complete documented practical experience requirements and agree to abide by the program's code of ethics.

The inspector's employer also must meet quality requirements. Only after successfully completing all elements of the program are inspectors certified by ALI. To find a local ALI Certified Lift Inspector, use the online directory at [www.autolift.org/find-a-certified-autolift-inspector/](http://www.autolift.org/find-a-certified-autolift-inspector/)



ALI Certified Lift Inspectors follow a standardized inspection procedure to prevent them from overlooking anything that a non-certified inspector might miss. They assess the lift, bay and shop and provide written reports with any repair recommendations to the supervisor or Fixed Ops Manager. The inspector then applies a serialized, dated label to each lift that passes inspection, making it clear at a glance when the lift was last inspected successfully.

**ALI CERTIFIED LIFT  
INSPECTORS FOLLOW  
A STANDARDIZED  
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TO PREVENT THEM FROM  
OVERLOOKING ANYTHING  
THAT A NON-CERTIFIED  
INSPECTOR MIGHT MISS.**

Remember, there's a whole lot more than cars and trucks riding on your lifts. For the safety of your Technicians, your customers and your business, choose your vehicle lifts carefully, make sure they're properly installed and maintained and have them inspected annually by an ALI Certified Lift Inspector.



*R.W. "Bob" O'Gorman has been the President of the Cortland, New York-based Automotive Lift Institute since 2005. The mission of ALI is to provide a high quality, independent, third-party Certification Program that promotes the safe design, construction, installation, inspection and use of automotive lift products. While quality improvement is the responsibility of every ALI employee, Certification Program Participant, Member and Associate Member Company, it's the quality control measures within each of the Certification Program's Participation Manual and Quality and Operational Procedures that ensure ALI's industry recognized certification marks maintain a high degree of integrity. The organization's website is [www.AutoLift.org](http://www.AutoLift.org)*

**Know Your Lift Standards**

The Automotive Lift Institute (ALI) sponsors several national standards to ensure the safe design, construction, installation, service, inspection and use of automotive lifts. Copies of the standards are available from ALI members or online at [www.autolift.org/ali-store/](http://www.autolift.org/ali-store/)

- ANSI/ALI ALCTV-2011 The national standard outlining requirements for lift construction, testing and validation. Lifts that are third-party tested and certified to meet this standard wear the ALI gold certification label and are listed at [www.autolift.org/ali-directory-of-certified-lifts](http://www.autolift.org/ali-directory-of-certified-lifts)
- ANSI/ALI ALIS 2009 (R2015) The national standard covering safety requirements for vehicle lift installation and service. Describes the duties and responsibilities of lift installers and Service Technicians, including the required qualifications, training, reporting and documentation.
- ANSI/ALI ALOIM: 2008 (R2013) The national standard defining safety requirements for lift operation, inspection and maintenance. It provides guidance to the lift owner or employer, including necessary qualifications, training, reporting and documentation for lift operators, inspectors and maintenance personnel.

**Stephanie Berdeaux**  
Auto/Diesel Technician

"As a kid, there was nothing I enjoyed more than hanging in the garage with my dad, working on the family vehicles. It was everything I loved - fixing, solving problems, working with my hands. I knew back then I wanted to be a tech. But little did I know the amazing things that it would mean for my future. Today, I'm proud **because I'm a tech!**"



FutureTech Success® is a program of the TechForce Foundation that aims to provide hands-on learning opportunities to students interested in pursuing a technical career in the transportation industry.

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