

## Lifting To The Next Level

After 80 years of New Orleans' humid summers, a distribution facility for Lafarge, one of the largest cement producers in the United States and Canada, was literally crumbling. So the company called in a team of maintenance experts to salvage the distribution facility.

David Soch and Emmett Moore quickly compiled a laundry list of maintenance problems, ranging from mechanical issues with the gates used to control the flow of cement, to changing the light bulbs that illuminated the truck loading area. In the process, they also identified the tools needed to complete the facility overhaul more safely, while reducing their employees' exposure to risk.

In the end, Soch and Moore completed all the necessary building updates safely and made their facility more productive and efficient in the process.

### **An Ideal Solution**

Many of the maintenance tasks required terminal employees to work at varying heights, from changing a light bulb at 8 feet, to repairing a cement-dispensing spout at 14 feet. The maintenance staff tried ladders, scissor lifts, and permanent and mobile work platforms to complete these tasks, but nothing satisfied the working height and mobility needs they faced.

"The permanent platforms were prohibitively expensive and couldn't be set up in every location we needed to access," explained Moore. "And many of our repair sites weren't safety accessible with a ladder. The modular platforms took hours to set up and required inspections prior to use, and the scissor lift was cumbersome and often too large to fit in the repair location. We just couldn't find an ideal solution."

While searching for alternatives, Soch and Moore came across the LiftPod by JLG, a personal, portable aerial work platform. They were impressed by the enclosed platform, which is safer than the ladders they had used previously. "The LiftPod could be used in most places to provide safer reach than a ladder and required less set up overall," Moore said.

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The LiftPod also was much easier to move around the work site than other work platform options. “Our terminal has a lot of unstable ground, and scissor lifts would often get stuck while we were moving them to the repair location,” explained Soch. “The LiftPod moved quicker and easier over the uneven terrain, and the three pieces were light enough to carry throughout the facility.”

### **An Inspection in a Day Keeps the LiftPod in Play**

When the team was tasked with completing a thorough inspection of a group of

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storage silos, they opted to use the LiftPod rather than a ladder. “We had to inspect every barrel valve, electronic component and solenoid on each of the 12 silos,” said Moore. “Using the LiftPod, the entire inspection took only one day to complete. If we had used a ladder, we would have had to add another two days to the project.”

Similarly, changing the light bulbs and performing maintenance on the dispense hose in the truck loading area is much easier and quicker using the LiftPod. “We can change a light bulb, clean the light cover, and fix the dispense hose all in the amount of time it took to complete just one of those tasks with the scissor lift, which we were paying more than \$400 a month to rent,” said Moore. “We couldn’t even use the scissor lift for most of the tasks we needed it for. We’ll see a return on our investment in the LiftPod in less than six months.”

### **One of a Kind**

Based on their many successes with the product, Soch and Moore are looking forward to sharing the LiftPod with colleagues at Lafarge’s many locations throughout the United States. “Many teams might be using ladders or scissor lifts simply because they don’t think they have another option,” said Soch. “There has never been something like the LiftPod that can help with so many maintenance applications. We believe we have established a symbiotic relationship between safety, productivity, and efficiency by adopting the Liftpod into our tool arsenal.”

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