

TOOLBOX TALKS

Safely Using Loaders

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TOPIC: Safely Using Loaders

General Information

Operating a loader, or any other type of machine, can be a dangerous activity if certain guidelines are not followed. A good understanding of working environments and machine capabilities is critical to safe operation. Listed below are guidelines to follow before, during and after operating a loader (**not all inclusive; always refer to Operation and Maintenance Manual for complete instructions**):

Before Operating the Loader

Obtain a pre-shift checklist if available and complete it accurately. It is important to always record the results of inspections. Additionally:

- Review the **Operation and Maintenance Manual** before operating; know the safety precautions
- Inspect the condition of the **tires or track shoes** for excessive wear, cracks and bulges
- Verify all **fluids** are at the right levels
- Inspect the **condition of the bucket, nuts, bolts** and other wear items for cracks or damage
- Verify there are **no rocks, debris** or other material that could fall back into the cab
- Always wear the proper **Personal Protective Equipment** for the job – Some applicable forms of PPE include leather gloves, protective helmets, eye and ear protection and steel-toed boots (make sure work boots have good tread)
- Use caution **accessing and exiting the cab** of the machine; maintain three points of contact at all times
- Verify all **gauges** are working properly and the inside of the cab is ready for safe use

Operating the Loader

- Always wear **seat belt and honk** horn before moving the loader
- In cold conditions, start the engine and **let it run at idle speed** for 15 minutes before operating; exercise the bucket up and down a few times to warm the hydraulic oil
- Never exceed **speed limits** and do not make sharp turns or aggressive moves – Never operate on an incline with the load in the raised position (doing so could result in tipping of the load or loader)
- Do not exceed the **rated loads** for the equipment; always attempt to center the load to the bucket when loading and unloading
- Always be **aware of surroundings -- Use a spotter** and know where pedestrians, objects, overhangs, fall hazards, uneven conditions and other vehicles are at all times

After Operating the Loader

- Let the loader **run at idle speed** for 5 minutes before completely shutting down
- Lower the **bucket to the ground** to avoid stress on hydraulic systems
- Clean the loader off with **high pressure water** before any mud or debris hardens
- Inspect and verify the **same items from before you operated the loader** (see above)
- Shut off the engine before **refueling**

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Discussion Date: _____

Employee Participants:

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