



Tailgate Safety Talk

Information You Can Use to Prevent Accidents & Injuries

Safe Work Around Heavy Equipment

Standing on the ground and looking up at heavy equipment can make you feel small and vulnerable. As a matter of fact, you are very small and potentially in harms way when working around heavy equipment. Dozers, dump trucks, backhoes, loaders, gradalls, vactor jets, and forklifts are all capable of doing enormous amounts of work. They are also capable of causing harm to workers on the ground.

What can you do? Here are some important steps you can take to protect yourself when working around heavy equipment:

- Don't assume that the operator can see you. If you're out of the operator's line of sight, they probably don't know you are there.
- If the equipment is backing up, get out of the way fast. Don't cross the path of equipment that is backing up, either. Keep your eye on it at all times.
- Cranes, backhoes, and gradalls have a swing radius that can crush or strike someone in that zone. You must be aware of the swing radius and remember not to enter that zone.
- Stay away from heavy equipment when it is operating or moving. Don't walk next to it. It could turn suddenly and hit you or the load its carrying could shift and fall on you.
- Never walk under a load that is being moved by a crane or forklift.
- Don't go near any equipment that is operating near power lines or other electrical equipment. If it accidentally makes contact with the hazard, you could be electrocuted.
- Never ride on any heavy equipment unless you are completely inside the cab and there is plenty of room for the operator to do their job. Walk, don't ride, if the equipment is not designed for anyone other than the operator.
- If the equipment needs to be repaired or adjusted, make sure it is completely shut down and there is no residual power or hydraulic pressure that could crush or electrocute you. Don't work on the equipment unless you are trained to do so.

Users of this tailgate talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations.