

Safety News



Driving Vehicles & Moving Equipment Safely



Many workplace injuries and deaths involve vehicles and moving equipment, but sometimes this equipment is essential to the work operation. All vehicle and equipment operators should be trained, competent, and safety-minded to avoid costly accidents and injuries. Before operation, drivers should carefully read the operator's manual and observe the operating, maintenance, and safety instructions.



Operators should be prepared for a safe day at the wheel, by getting enough rest and taking occasional breaks, especially on hot days, to reduce fatigue. Vehicle operation should be limited or avoided when drivers are ill or taking medications that can affect alertness. Operators should dress appropriately for the weather and work conditions, including head and eye protection. If the vehicle doesn't have a protective cab, dust respirator and acoustic earmuffs or plugs may be required. Before driving, seat belts should be securely fastened, even if the vehicle has roll over protection (ROPs). No one should ride on any part of a moving vehicle, except areas intended for transport. If there are no passenger seats, there should be no riders. Operators should see to it that everyone is at a safe distance from the equipment before moving. Only those with a driver's license should drive equipment on public roads.



Vehicle ground speed should match operating conditions. Speed should be cut in turns, when near ditches and obstacles, on rough, hilly or muddy ground, and when visibility is poor. All workers should be warned not to approach or get on equipment that is under power. When the vehicle is stopped, brakes should be set securely, using park lock, and remove keys to keep unauthorized persons or children from restarting the machinery. Operators should disengage the power take off, keeping shields and guards in place, and turn off the engine before unclogging, refueling or working on any power-driven machine.



Other workers can avoid danger from moving equipment by staying alert, out of the way, and by never walking under or alongside moving equipment. As an added safety precaution, a first-aid kit with emergency numbers should be kept in the vehicle or close enough for quick access.

