

Safety Meeting Heavy Equipment



Company: _____ Presenter: _____ Date: _____

This safety topic is heavy equipment. It includes machines like cranes, back hoes, forklifts, bobcats, loaders, scrapers, and bulldozers. Almost every construction worker is exposed to this type of equipment and the hazards it presents. You must be extremely careful around these machines because they are very unforgiving of mistakes.

There are many hazards associated with working near heavy equipment. First of all, it's big enough and/or powerful enough to squash you like a bug. Underground structures like basements, vaults, culverts, and tanks can collapse under the weight of these heavy machines. Many of these machines carry large loads that can fall or tip over. Excavation cave-ins can be caused by the weight of the equipment, or even by the vibrations that the machines produce in the ground. One of the largest categories of heavy equipment accidents occurs when someone is struck by a machine that is backing up. This kind of accident is the focus of this topic. The reminders that follow are for operators and bystanders alike, so everyone should be paying close attention.

Operators first: your primary responsibility has to be the safe operation of your machine! When it comes to backing up, make sure that the backup alarm is working properly. Know where the blind spots are (or learn if you need to) and what they keep you from seeing. Don't move your machine forward or backward if you have any doubt about who or what might be in a blind spot. Sometimes a spotter may be needed in order for you to move the machine safely. If you need a spotter, make sure you get one before you make the move. Whenever possible, plan your moves to minimize the amount of back-ing up that you have to do.

Now for the rest of us who have to work around or near this equipment -- the people who are in the most danger. Start by paying attention to where you are, and where the heavy equipment is. Always keep a safe distance between you and the machines. On many sites, there are backup alarms beeping all day long and it's very easy to start ignoring them. When you hear one, at least look up and see where the machine is. Don't let yourself ignore the warning. As much as possible, keep vehicles and materials out of the areas where heavy equipment is operating. This will reduce the number of obstacles that the operator has to avoid.

SAFETY REMINDER: Don't ever argue with heavy equipment. No matter how right you may be, it will always win the fight.

Employee Signatures
