



TOOLBOX TALK: Heavy Equipment

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Heavy equipment is just what it says it is - 'HEAVY'. These large and powerful machines can be dangerous to those that work around them as well as those who operate them. The first thing that we need to recognize is that the operator has a limited sight range and blind spots as well. NEVER assume that the operator can see you!

All bi-directional earth moving equipment that has the rear view obstructed must have a backup alarm. This alarm is an audible device that emits a warning sound to let you know that the piece of equipment is backing up. ALWAYS observe this warning -- look up from what you are doing and make sure you are out of the way. It is often difficult to hear the backup alarm on noisy construction sites, so if you're working nearby, be cautious and extra alert for the sound of the alarm. Other types of heavy equipment are equipped with a horn similar to the one that you have in your car. The operator may sound the horn to warn you or to get your attention to let you know that he is about to swing something around or over you.

Keep a keen eye out for the movement of equipment, especially around pinch points. These areas should be barricaded off to limit access so no one gets crushed when a crane swings around.

If you are the operator of heavy equipment, ALWAYS check the brakes, steering, backup alarm, headlights and other controls before starting. Don't forget to wear your personal protective equipment. Eye protection, safety boots, hard hat or hearing protection may be required by your employer. If it's required be sure to wear it.

Another area of concern is those who try to hitch a ride on a piece of equipment. This is absolutely forbidden! To do so will cause an accident should the rider fall off. A good rule to follow is 'NO PASSENGERS ALLOWED' under ANY circumstances.

IF THE HEAVY EQUIPMENT YOU OPERATE HAS A SEAT BELT MAKE SURE YOU WEAR IT!