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WELCOME!

Welcome to the Hard Hat Training Series by Safety Provisions! Today, we'll be discussing front-end loaders (also called bucket loaders, wheel loaders, etc.).

Front end loaders are a staple of construction work. These vehicles are versatile and powerful, with a variety of options and attachments to choose from. It is likely that you've seen many of these machines while passing construction sites.





These machines have many responsibilities on the worksite. Some of their tasks include stockpiling, heavy lifting, demolition, backfilling, landscaping, and dozens of other jobs. When operating a front-end loader, it is likely that you will be given many unique tasks.



Because they are used so often, many operators begin to feel overly confident when operating these machines. Keep in mind that front end loaders are not toys. These heavy vehicles can be very dangerous in the wrong hands. To illustrate this point, consider the story of Nate.






Nate operated a front-end loader for a small-scale construction company. He had more than 10 years of experience with the loader and was more than capable of performing his duties. However, this capability led to overconfidence. Unfortunately, Nate became more reckless in his decision making. He began to forget safe procedures and adopted bad work habits in their place.

One day, Nate operated his loader during a project on a public road. His coworker stood at the edge of the site, providing traffic control. While backing up, Nate heard the backing alarm. He assumed everyone on the site could hear it and did not bother to check behind his loader while he backed into position. Unfortunately, his coworker could not hear due to high traffic.





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As Nate backed up, he could suddenly hear screaming. He immediately drove his loader forward and leaped down to see what happened. Other workers arrived to see that the coworker had been run over by Nate's rear tire. He was rushed to the hospital but did not recover from his wounds. He would die a day later due to crushing injuries.



Unfortunately, Nate's story is not an isolated one. Every year, hundreds of preventable accidents and fatalities occur because workers neglect safety procedures. The goal of this training is to arm you with the knowledge you need to stay safe on the job. Knowing good work practices will make you safer, effective, and more confident as you carry out your duties.



Throughout this training, we will look at real, investigated accident profiles. In some cases, two or three similar accidents have been combined for the purpose of illustrating key safety principles. They will show just how quickly things can go wrong when safety procedures are ignored, resulting in injuries or fatalities.

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STANDARDS

These are some of the main standards concerning today's topic. Many states or provinces have additional standards, as do some industries. We have provided these as a guide, but it's your responsibility to know all federal, local, and company rules that apply to your job site.



General Duty Clause 5(a)(1)

29 CFR 1926.600 – Equipment


29 CFR 1926.602 – Material Handling Equipment

29 CFR 1926.602(a) – Earthmoving Equipment, General

29 CFR 1926.604 – Site Clearing

29 CFR 1926.650 – Excavations






No matter the situation, it's important to ask, "Where do we stand?" While experience is deemed "qualified" in some industries, OSHA's approach helps, yes, but regulations are very clear that employees must be trained (no matter how long they've been on the job) and that it is the employer who is responsible for overseeing that safety training, ensuring employees have the understanding, knowledge, and skills needed to operate safely.

INITIAL TRAINING and REFRESHER TRAINING, as well as any WRITTEN AND PRACTICAL EVALUATIONS, must be documented and filed. At the very least, employers need to show proof of PROPER AND CONSISTENT TRAINING (in the way of TRAINING OUTLINES, CLASS LISTS, TRAINING GOALS, TESTS, CERTIFICATES, and SO ON.) These documents should include the name of the person who taught the class or conducted the evaluation.





However, training is **NOT** just a one-and-done occurrence; it is **ON-GOING**. In fact, training should take place whenever there is a demonstrated need for it.

Employees **MUST** receive **REFRESHER TRAINING** in the following instances...

1

There are changes in their assigned duties



2

There are changes regarding potential exposure hazards, for which the employee has not received training



3



Any deficiency has been noted in an employee's work performance that is related to the safety and health of themselves or other workers

4

An accident has occurred, or an employee has been injured (or nearly injured) during operations



The extent of training will be determined by the employer, but at the very least it should include **CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION** followed by a **WRITTEN AND PRACTICAL EXAMINATION** that prove continued competency.



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