



## Heavy Equipment Operations

Operating heavy equipment on or near the road can be hazardous, and Members are encouraged to provide employees with training before they operate any piece of heavy equipment. Training ensures that each operator is competent to operate the equipment safely. Remember the R.O.A.D. Ready acronym:

### **Recognize the Hazards**

- Ensure the equipment is safe to operate by completing a thorough pre-trip inspection.
- Always maintain three points of contact when entering/exiting equipment.
- Watch out for co-workers, pedestrians, vehicles, and fixed objects.
- When transporting equipment, ensure all tie down points are properly secure, including any attachments.



### **Observe People, Processes, and Equipment**

- As the operator of equipment or a vehicle, you have the right to call a **"Safety Time Out"** if the equipment or vehicle is not safe to drive or operate. Contact your supervisor immediately to correct any deficiencies prior to operation.
- You also have the right to call a **"Safety Time Out"** if you observe present or evolving roadway hazards at a worksite.
- Double check that all overhead power lines and low clearance obstructions have been identified.
- Check that underground utilities, such as water, gas, sewer, fiber optic, and electric lines have been located.
- Observe how visible you, co-workers, equipment, and the worksite are to motorists.
- Observe how much advance notice of your worksite motorists have.

### **Assess the Risk Level**

- If loading or unloading in the street, are you placing people and equipment in unprotected areas?
- Are employees standing within danger zones of equipment?
- Have you performed a 360-degree walk around?
- Are drivers unaware that you or a worksite is present?
- Is there effective traffic control for roadway exposures?

### **Determine the Safest Course of Action**

- When operating heavy equipment, create a sphere of safety by eliminating hazards above, below, and around the equipment.
- Let drivers know in advance that you and a worksite are present.
- Help drivers see you with high visibility clothing.
- Use effective traffic control devices to tell drivers you are ahead, and what you want them to do as they operate their vehicles near your equipment and crews.
- Use an internal traffic control plan to help avoid pedestrian accidents.

### **Additional Resources:**

- Texas Department of Insurance – Workplace Safety Videos - [Workplace Safety Videos \(state.tx.us\)](https://www.tdi.state.tx.us/workplace-safety)
  - Construction Safety – Several Titles Under "Struck-by Accidents"; Heavy Equipment Safety – Several Titles Under This Topic; Trailer Safety – "Trailer Safety Checklist"; Work Zone Safety - Several Titles Under This Topic
- TMLIRP's Media Library contains multiple DVD's related to this topic that are Department specific:  
<https://www.tmlirp.org/risk-management/multimedia/>