Vehicle Maintenance and Energy Control (Safety Brief)

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PACIF has developed Safety Briefs to help municipal highway supervisors maintain a high level of safety and hazard awareness among employees. We recommend using these short "tailgate trainings" on a regular basis – and **at least once a month**. If you need a particular safety topic, please contact us at losscontrol@vlct.org.

Information for Supervisors

When performing vehicle maintenance tasks, employees may be exposed to a wide range of hazardous energy exposures. Things like stored hydraulic pressure, air pressure, moving parts and vehicles, or even raised equipment pose hazards. Can a plow, wing or bucket fall from a raised position while it is being worked on? It can, unless its potential to fall is controlled by placing the piece of equipment on the ground, by dead blocking, or by other means. With this in mind, it is important to educate employees about energy control exposures in your workplace and reinforce the use of energy control procedures. If you need help developing your own procedures (which are required by VOSHA), please email or call VLCT Loss Control.

Talking Points for Training

When working in situations where vehicles or attachments might move, there is an energy control exposure. Working on hydraulic lines, electrical systems, air brakes, and other systems also expose employees to uncontrolled releases of energy. Some tips to prevent injuries from uncontrolled releases of energy include the following:

- Anyone performing vehicle maintenance tasks must understand potential sources of hazardous energy and methods to control them. Some of the more obvious sources of hazardous energy and their controls include:

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1. Vehicle movement. The vehicles should be chocked in both directions to restrict movement. Setting the air brake is not adequate.
2. Control the movement of belts, pulleys, shafts etc. The vehicle should not be able to be started. A simple way to control this is by requiring the person performing the repairs to have the key in their pocket.
3. Control hydraulic, air pressure and electrical exposures. If working on air or hydraulic lines, bleed lines prior to beginning maintenance activities. Consider whether there is a shock hazard and disconnect the electrical system if needed.
4. Prevent raised objects/equipment (such as dump bodies, plows, wings, buckets, etc.) from falling. These should all be dead blocked, placed on the ground, or controlled with specially designed devices (such has a Dump-Lok).

- Anyone not performing maintenance activities, but working in the area, must understand the reason for energy controls and be able to identify when they are in use. Furthermore, make sure they know to never touch equipment where energy controls are in use.

PACIF has had some fairly serious claims from individuals who have been struck by falling buckets, crushed by rolling vehicles and injured while working on live spreaders. By reminding employees about the importance of energy controls and following procedures, we hope to avoid these in the future. As always, contact your loss control consultant with any questions you may have about energy control programs or procedures.

Safety Training Attendance Roster

Trainer:	Training Date:
1.	9.
2.	10.

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3.	11.
4.	12.
5.	13.
6.	14.
7.	15.
8.	16.

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