Heavy Equipment Hazards

(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 or call PACIF Loss Control at 800-649-7915.

Information for Supervisors

Heavy equipment is commonly used in many municipal public works operations and tasks. While these can make a task much easier and save time, they can also present hazards to the operator and other workers on site, as well as potential hazards to the general public. For example a worker could be electrocuted by overhead or underground power lines, crushed if the equipment overturns, struck by backhoe or excavator booms, or struck by passing vehicles. A healthy respect for the use and operation of heavy equipment is a must for all operators and employees on the job site. Take the time to remind your employees of these hazards and safety "best practices".

Talking Points for Training

Vehicle:

- Make sure Dig Safe has been contacted and has marked any planned excavation location prior to beginning work.
- Be familiar with your equipment's blind spots: it may be helpful to mark these so everyone knows where they are. These vary depending on the specific type of equipment in use. Be vigilant in watching for employees on the ground.

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- Conduct a pre-use safety inspection of the equipment. Make sure all controls are in proper working order prior to each use and that all attachments are properly connected. Consider adding a back-up camera to the vehicle if it's not equipped with one.
- Be aware of and work within the vehicle's load rating and capacities. Follow all manufacturer safety information.
- Always use a seat belt if the equipment is equipped with roll over protection. Most heavy equipment fatalities occur when operators leap from overturning vehicles.
- Always use a 3-point technique to enter and exit the vehicle. Never jump as this is major cause of injury.
- Identify overhead electrical hazards. Maintain all required separation distances and use signage if needed.

Site Works:

- Never ride on a piece of heavy equipment or bucket. This is a serious hazard and VOSHA violation.
- Establish hand signals and use only one person as a signal person. Maintain a high level of awareness!
- Be familiar of the swing radius of the equipment and always establish eye contact with the operator when working near the bucket or within the swing radius. Avoid working in the blind spots!
- Always wear high visibility clothing to enhance visibility to the operator and motorists.
- Avoid working under a bucket, backhoe, or any load.

Safety Training Attendance Roster

Trainer: Training Date:

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