

Pre-Operational Inspection of Equipment Meeting Kit



THE PRE-OPERATIONAL SAFETY INSPECTION

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Getting into the habit of regularly inspecting all equipment is a simple but important preventative measure, and should be part of every operator’s daily pre-shift routine.

A useful tool is the Pre-Operational Inspection Checklist. Implementing the use of a paper checklist system reminds the operator to regularly perform all pre-shift checks, ensures that problems are documented and communicated to supervisors, and helps pinpoint when and how changes in the condition of the equipment occurred.

- Performing the pre-operational check is important for the safety of the operator and everyone in its working environment. Unfortunately, this safety check is often forgotten or ignored. Not every operator is aware of the items that need to be checked before they can start their machine and begin to perform their daily tasks.
- The equipment operator can prevent downtime, extend service life and ensure more efficient operation with just a few minutes of preventive inspection both pre- and post-operation.
- The key is consistency. These inspections must be engrained into all parties and performed every day.

THE INSPECTION CHECKLIST

- Check tires, rims or undercarriage for damage or abnormal wear and clear away debris. Much like you don’t operate at full capacity on a broken foot or while wearing shoes that are broken or don’t fit, a machine can be hobbled by the inefficiencies of the tires or tracks it sits on. Identify and report any damage or potential damage.
- Check fluid levels – engine and hydraulic oil, diesel and diesel exhaust fluid (DEF), and coolant. Fluids are the lifeblood of each machine and require specified levels to operate properly. A sudden drop in fluid levels may point to any number of problems with the machine that require immediate attention (blown hoses, leaking filter, etc.).
- Clear any accumulated debris from around the radiator and other engine components. The engine is made of moving parts and belts that generate heat and friction – and systems designed to cool the engine compartment require room to breathe. It’s important to check and remove any clutter or material from the jobsite that may have found its way into the engine compartment.
- **Check the fuel, oil, air and other filters** for signs of damage or leaking.

- **Check belts (alternator, fan, etc.).** A worn and frayed belt is another wear item that is relatively easy to replace.
- **Identify greasing points and frequency.**
- **Check for leaking or pooled fluid around and under the machine.**
- **Check auxiliary hydraulic connections and pressure.**
- **Check for new signs of structural damage, scratches or dents on the machine.**
- **Check for damage on ground engaging tools (buckets, teeth, etc.).**
- **Inspect the attachment mount-up to ensure proper connection.**
- **Inspect the operator compartment and clear away any debris or obstructions.**
- **Check and set mirrors.**
- **Familiarize yourself with the control style and change as needed.**
- **Identify auxiliary/attachment controls.**
- **Start the engine and review console indicators and warnings.**
- **If equipped, check the rear-view camera.**
- **Review all external surroundings from the cab.**

FINAL WORD

A visual “circle check” or pre-operational inspection of equipment prior to every use will reduce the chance of equipment being operated in an unsafe condition. This makes it easier to spot and deal with maintenance issues early before they turn into a problem causing downtime, equipment damage or expensive repairs.