Preventing Equipment Damage Incidents (Construction) Meeting Kit



Preventing Equipment Damage Incidents (Construction) Safety Talk

The goal of operating safely is first to protect life and secondary is to protect property. The construction industry can not only be hazardous to workers, but equipment damage incidents can be frequent and costly. Anytime there is equipment damage not only is there an associated cost, but there is also the chance for injury for the operators or ground personnel in the area.

Causes and Types of Heavy Equipment and Machinery Accidents

Heavy equipment and machinery accidents can result from an endless list of factors. From operator error to equipment and machinery defects, if just one thing goes wrong, the consequences can be devastating. Some of the types of heavy equipment and machinery most-commonly involved in workplace accidents include:

- Backhoes and loaders
- Bulldozers
- Cherry pickers
- Combines and other farming equipment
- Cranes
- Dump trucks
- Electric hand trucks
- Excavators
- Forklifts
- Industrial and factory machines
- Trenchers
- Warehouse equipment and machinery

BEST PRACTICES TO PREVENT EQUIPMENT DAMAGE

Mechanical failure of equipment, machinery, and tools can involve many problems, such as misalignment of parts, power surge overloads, broken gear sets, chips or breaks of parts, and oil contamination. In some cases, the breakdown of a part can cause further damage to the machinery and lead to its malfunction and a worker being injured. **There are many reasons why equipment fails and causes accidents including:**

Wear and tear. Parts in machinery and tools will wear down over time due to their constant use. At some point, they must be replaced due to wear and tear. When employers fail to replace them due to the cost, they will malfunction—sometimes repeatedly if only minor repairs are done.

Defective design or manufacture. In some cases, the machinery, equipment, or tools were designed or manufactured improperly. If the defect is serious enough, it can cause a catastrophic workplace accident if the machinery malfunctions or breaks down.

Lack of training. Workers must be trained in the safe use of heavy equipment, like forklifts, bulldozers, and other heavy machinery and equipment, before using them on the job. Even drills, power saws, and other power tools can be extremely dangerous if workers use them without training in their safe use. Many tragic accidents occur when employers do not take their workers' safety seriously and do not invest the time to properly train their employees.

Improper maintenance. Employers have a duty to inspect, repair, and replace machinery, equipment, and tools on a regular basis. Unfortunately, many employers do not do this, which can result in a tragic workplace accident.

Operator error. Many accidents occur when operators of equipment and machinery make errors or engage in negligent actions. This can lead to their own injuries or the injuries of others, such as when a heavy machine operator hits a nearby worker.

TAKE AWAY

Think. Do not act without giving careful thought.

How To Prevent Injury and Accidents On A Constructions Site

Safety regulations and protocols should be properly demonstrated and explained. Regular employee meetings should happen to review ways to improve safety and to check that regulations are being followed.

There can be signs posted about safety standards and what should and shouldn't be done in certain areas of the site. Some of the additional things that can be done are:

- Try and keep a clean and tidy worksite. This can prevent injury to people and equipment.
- Safety training should be provided for all employees, especially when first beginning a job.
- Having proper signs displayed of what is allowed in certain sections of the worksite.

Always have employees wear proper PPE at all times when the job requires it. Some of the most common types that should be worn on construction sites are hard hats, safety glasses, gloves, steel toe boots, safety vests, ear protection, and harnesses.

Put the proper steps in to play where they are needed. Secure items that are at high surfaces that could fall and hit someone or equipment below.

Managers, supervisors, or whoever is in charge should do regular inspections and observations of the work being done. This can help to ensure all the right steps and precautions are being taken at all times.

Equipment should always be returned to the proper storing spaces that are provided for it. Leaving it out or even unattended when not in use can lead to unsafe circumstances occurring.

Proper safety precautions should be worn when operating heavy equipment. The seatbelts that are provided for the operator should always be worn when the machinery is in use.

FINAL WORD

Think about the equipment damage events you have experienced on this job or on past jobs. What was similar about each incident? What could have been done differently to prevent it? What situations may arise here that could result in damage to heavy equipment?