



## **Chapter 1: Mobile Equipment Operation Program**



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## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this program is to ensure that employees operate mobile equipment in a safe manner and in compliance with all applicable regulations.

Employees may only operate equipment they have been trained and authorized to use by supervisory personnel. If you are not sure on the operation of any tractors or equipment, ask your supervisor for instructions.

For information on how to become an authorized vehicle driver and university vehicle use policies and procedures, access the link copied below.

<https://businessservices.wisc.edu/managing-risk/driver-authorization-and-insurance/>

## 2.0 General Rules

- Before operating any of the equipment, be sure you are informed of all safety precautions. This includes reading and following the safety procedures in the manufacturer's manual.
- All personal protective equipment (PPE) including eye and hearing protection must be worn when required.
- All tractors, vehicles, and equipment should be checked for any broken or unsafe parts before operating.
- Implements must be kept in the locked position or lowered when not in use.
- Safety pins must be in place at all times on trailing equipment.
- Ensure equipment warning signs/labels are kept clean and legible.
- Do not operate PTO equipment without all shields in place.
- Loose clothing should not be worn around any PTO equipment.
- When towing equipment, choose a large enough tow rope or chain and secure it adequately. Bring tow line taut before applying power. Stand clear of equipment being towed in case the tow line breaks.

## 3.0 Tractors and Vehicles

- No riders are permitted on tractors or equipment.
- Ensure all required safety devices are in-place (i.e. seatbelts and roll-over protective structures).
- Tractors and vehicles must be operated at safe and legal speeds (5 mph in University of Wisconsin farmsteads).
- Be alert for electric wires or low objects when using hoists on trucks or moving long or tall pieces of equipment such as grain elevators.
- Use safety straps or chains to fasten lawn mowers or other equipment to trailers.
- Avoid sharp uphill turns on a side slope.
- Travel no faster than 3 mph on a side slope.
- Do not suddenly apply brakes when rolling backwards on an incline.

## 4.0 Skid Steer

### Safe Operating Procedures:

- Operate the loader only when properly positioned in the operator's compartment.
- Stay seated.
- Always use a seatbelt and ensure the restraint bar is properly positioned.
- Keep hands, arms, legs, and head inside the operator's compartment.
- Operate the skid steer on level/stable surfaces when possible. Avoid slippery surfaces.
- Travel and turn with the bucket as low as possible.
- When on slopes, travel straight up or down, with the heavy end of the machine pointed uphill.
- Do not modify or bypass safety devices.
- Riders are not permitted on the equipment.

### Entering and Exiting:

- Enter and exit a loader when the bucket is flat on the ground or when the lift-arm support device is in place.
- When entering a loader, face the seat and keep a three-point contact with handholds and steps.
- NEVER use foot or hand controls as steps or handholds.
- Keep all walking and working surfaces clean and clear of debris.
- Before leaving the operator's seat:
  - lower the bucket flat on the ground,
  - set the parking brake,
  - turn off the engine.

### Maintenance:

- Ensure the foot controls are free of mud, ice, snow, and debris.
- Always follow the manufacturer's guidelines for inspection and maintenance.
- Inspect and maintain the following safety devices:
  - Control interlocks
  - Seat belts
  - Restraint bars
  - Side screens
  - Rollover protective structures (ROPS)
  - Falling object protective structures (FOPS)
- Always follow the manufacturer's recommended load capacity.
- If you must perform service under a raised bucket, make sure the lift-arm support device is in place.

Source: [www.cdc.gov/niosh](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh)

## 5.0 Lawn Mower Operation

Read all attachment and power unit manuals before operating equipment. Follow all safety rules and safety decal information. Failure to follow instructions or safety rules can result in serious injury or death. If you do not understand any part of the manuals, contact your supervisor.

### Preparation

- Always wear appropriate clothing to avoid getting caught in moving parts and required PPE.
- Make sure attachments are properly secured, adjusted and in good operating condition.
- Make sure shields and guards are properly installed and in good condition.
- Remove accumulated debris from equipment, power unit, and engine daily or when needed to avoid fire hazard. Let power unit cool before removing debris.
- Frequently check blades. They should be sharp and free of nicks and cracks, and securely fastened.
- Inspect and clear area of stones, branches, or other hard objects that might be thrown, causing injury or damage.
- Know the controls and how to stop the engine and attachment quickly in an emergency.

### Operation

- Keep bystanders away from equipment.
- Never allow riders on power unit or attachment.
- Never direct discharge toward people, animals, or property.
- Keep hands, feet, hair and clothing away from equipment while engine is running. Stay clear of all moving parts.
- Do not operate PTO during transport.
- Look down and to the rear and make sure area is clear before operating in reverse.
- Do not mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary.
- Do not operate on slopes greater than 15 degrees (33% slope). Uneven terrain can cause the machine to overturn.
- Mow up and down slopes, not across.
- Use extreme care and reduce ground speed on slopes and rough terrain.
- Watch for hidden hazards on the terrain during operation.
- Watch for traffic when operating near or crossing roadways.
- Stop power unit and equipment immediately upon striking an obstruction. Turn the engine off, remove key, inspect, and repair damage before resuming operation. Get assistance if unable to make repairs.

## **Maintenance**

- Have appropriate personnel provide equipment maintenance at required intervals.
- Before performing any service or maintenance, lower attachment to the ground, shut down the engine, remove key, and disconnect battery ground cable.
- Securely block mower before working underneath.
- Do not work under elevated mower deck unless lockup mechanism is in good condition and fully engaged as instructed. Replace if damaged.
- Leak down or failure of mechanical or hydraulic systems can cause equipment to drop.
- Check all fluid levels daily before operating power unit.

## **6.0 Training**

The Agricultural Research Stations (ARS) must ensure that all employees who operate tractors receive training before employees are allowed to operate the equipment. In addition to the initial training, refresher training must be provided on an annual basis per OSHA 29CFR 1928.51(d). Training records shall be maintained by each ARS station.