



Employer – Truck, Trailer & Mobile Equipment Entry & Exit Strategies

Numerous workers are seriously injured each day while getting into or out of truck cabs, mobile equipment, and trailers. Often, we enter and exit vehicles and equipment so frequently we tend to discount the risk that is present. In reality, a fall from only a few feet off the ground can have tragic outcomes.

Many times, three points of contact are not maintained, resulting in a slip or fall. Even intended actions such as jumping from vehicles and trailers onto uneven ground, objects, or landing wrong result in many knee, ankle, and back injuries. Studies show that jumping from a distance of as little as 4 feet on a 200 pound individual can hit the ground with a force of upwards of 2000 pounds.

WHAT THE EMPLOYER CAN DO:

- Set schedules and routes that do not encourage rushing.
- Evaluate new and existing equipment for adequate access points, steps, non-slip surfaces, and handholds. Provide additional equipment where necessary.
- Maintain steps, contact surfaces, and handholds in useable condition through daily inspection and routine maintenance. This should be a part of every pre-operation inspection. Promptly address any defects, issues, or concerns.
- Provide shovels, stiff brooms or brushes and towels for employees to use to clean surfaces, handholds, and footholds.
- Implement footwear policies to ensure employees have footwear with adequate traction.
- Evaluate opportunities to reduce the need to climb onto trailers. For example, automatic tarping systems or devices such as snow rakes to clean a flatbed from ground level rather than accessing the deck.
- Employ fall protection systems for open top or flatbed trailers. Utilize access ladders for flatbeds and ramps for box trucks.
- Provide a yard or parking area free of mud, ice, uneven surfaces, etc. for employees to park in.





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- Instruct all workers in safely mounting and dismounting equipment, including the “Three-Point Rule.” The Three-Point Rule requires three of four points of contact to be maintained with the vehicle at all times – two hands and one foot, or both feet and one hand. This system allows maximum stability and support, reducing the likelihood of slipping and falling. Any employee training should be hands on and include having employees demonstrate safe entry and exit practices.
- Install warning decals or signs to mark the edge of trailers in the cab or on the door of trucks and heavy equipment reminding workers to use 3-point contact.
- Confirm adequacy of the equipment, processes, and training through on-going observations and feedback. Act promptly on deficiencies or improvement areas identified.
- Regularly discuss slip, trip, and fall concerns with drivers / employees to seek input, suggestions, and additional concerns.
- Continuously seek opportunities for improved controls through new or evolving technologies, such as lighting for truck steps that activates when the door is opened.



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