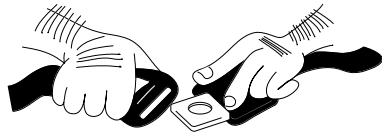


Seat Belts? What Seat Belt?



When talking "safety," we use the term "protect human life." That's what the wearing of seat belts is all about: HUMAN LIFE! Yours, mine, ours, our co-workers, our fellow human beings. It's a precious commodity, human life, and seat belts can help preserve it. Wear them!

Do you drive a pick-up truck for your company? Do you drive any type of vehicle for your company? Do you operate any type of off-the-road equipment for your company?

Next question. And this is the BIG ONE! Do you always wear your seat belts? If not, why not?

It wrinkles my pants. It squeezes my chest too tight. I can't reach my car radio dials with my seat belt on. When I reach out the window to pay my tunnel toll, I can't reach the coin box. Golly, these are really good excuses not to wear your seat belt. I feel your pain!

But what if you were to read in an industry publication that a co-worker of yours fell out of his excavator and was crushed to death, and it was reported that he wasn't wearing his seat belt. Now whose pain do you feel?

Most heavy equipment used in construction comes equipped with the following protective devices:

- Roll-Over Protective Bars
- Steel Plate Roofs
- Seat Belts

The ROPS (Roll-over Protection) and FOPS (Fall-on Protection) are structurally integrated into the equipment, and therefore provide both constant and primary protection to the equipment operator.

Seat belts, however, are "elective" in terms of how the operator will use them when he enters the cab. Does he hook them up the minute he enters the cab? Does he check the seat belt mechanism to determine if it is in working order? Does he cinch up the belt tight, so that it surrounds his torso, or fits snugly?

Or, is the seat belt left lying on the cab floor? Or, is the seat belt tucked "under" the operator's seat, so that it won't get in the way? Or, even worse, has the seat belt been completely severed, and thrown away?

Is there a decal in the cab, warning the operator to WEAR YOUR SEAT BELT WHILE THIS EQUIPMENT IS IN OPERATION?

Here are some questions every operator should ask himself:

- **Do you wear your seat belt** at all times while operating both over-the-road equipment, or off-the-road equipment? If not, why not?
- **Do you report defective** seat belt mechanisms to your foreman, shop foreman, or proper company representative?

- **When you prepare** “Defective Equipment Reports,” do you include the condition of your seat belt mechanism?
- **Did you know** that OSHA requires all operators to affix their seat belts while the equipment is in operation?
- **If your seat belt** will not function, do you refuse to operate the equipment until it is repaired? If not, why not?
- **When you do an equipment** “walk-around” do you include the seat belt in your examination?
- **Do you realize** that if you are not using your seat belt, and your equipment topples over, you can be killed? Does this concern you?

What is your personal attitude towards the use of seat belts? Do you use the seat belts in your personal vehicle? Your company vehicle?

If you answered NO to these last two questions, you could be considered a menace to both your co-workers, your family, and yourself.

The wearing and use of seat belts is not OPTIONAL. It is MANDATORY!!!!!!