

SAFETY MEETING TOPIC: Vehicle Safety Part 2

In a place as busy as the average service center, moving RVs, Busses, and heavy equipment is always risky business. These vehicles are hard to see around, even with mirrors. Because of this, the best policy when driving large vehicles is to avoid any unnecessary movements. When you must back-up or move into a blind spot, prevent accidents by taking the following precautions:

- Check the surrounding area for obstacles before beginning an operation. Walk around and become familiar with the entire area. Remember that materials and equipment are constantly being moved around, so you can't assume that you "know the territory" if you haven't explored it recently.
- As much as possible, keep other vehicles, materials, equipment, and people out of areas where heavy equipment is operating.
- Make sure your mirrors are properly angled to minimize blind spots. And remember that, even with mirrors, you may not see everything behind you.
- Use your horn to signal that you are about to back-up. Audible alarms must be louder than the surrounding noise levels.
- If you are unable to see behind you, always use a person as a "spotter". Make sure you can see the "spotter" at all times – stop immediately if the spotter is not in view.
- Be familiar with the limitations of the equipment you are operating. Use only the equipment you are trained to use and in the method it was intended.
- Never allow 'hitchhikers' to ride on equipment while in motion. This includes allowing others to ride in the cab or on the step ladder. Most vehicles and equipment require the operator to wear a seatbelt. The number of employees in a vehicle should not exceed the number of seatbelts.
- When parking equipment, always set the parking brake and chock the tire when on any degree of slope.

It would be great if all workers were looking out for their own safety. But you can't take it for granted that everyone else is on the lookout. When you are behind the wheel of large vehicles, you have the responsibility to use that power carefully and safely to prevent accidents. The key to staying out of danger is never to assume that the path behind is clear, unless you and your "spotter" can actually see it.