

## Front End Loader

Front end loaders are one of the most commonly used types of heavy equipment. These machines are found in a variety of industries completing a magnitude of different tasks. These machines may not be the largest or viewed as the most hazardous on a job, but year after year they are responsible for many injuries and fatalities.

### Types of Hazards Created by Front End Loader Operation

Several types of incidents show up multiple times on the first few pages of the accident search results for front end loaders on OSHA's website. Three common types of front end loader incidents that can result in serious injuries or fatalities are struck-by incidents, caught-in or between incidents, and tip-overs.

- **Struck-by incidents:** Many of the fatalities listed on OSHA's database were a result of a struck-by incident. All too often ground personnel find themselves in a blind spot and an operator will strike them with the loader. Also the load carried by a front end loader can strike personnel on the ground causing serious injuries.
- **Caught-in or between:** Similar to struck-by incidents, caught-in or between incidents are responsible for many injuries and fatalities. Workers can find themselves pinned in between the front end loader and another object such as a wall. The load the machine is carrying or working underneath the attachment in the front of the machine can also create an incident where a worker suffers a caught-in or between injuries.
- **Tip-overs:** When a front loader is operated outside of its design limits or in an unsafe way, they are susceptible to tip-over incidents. Loads that are too heavy, uneven terrain, and unsafe speeds are a few common factors for tip-over incidents.

### Best Practices While Operating a Front End Loader

- Operate the equipment within its design limits. Read the operator's manual prior to using any front end loader.
- Ensure you have the proper training for the equipment you are using.
- Never overload the equipment. Always use proper lifting and rigging techniques when lifting a load with a front end loader. Travel with loads or attachments low to the ground.
- Never carry passengers on a front end loader unless it is designed to carry passengers.
- Setup work areas and tasks in such a way that foot traffic is eliminated or minimized around where heavy equipment is operating.
- Utilize a spotter for tasks when personnel or property can be struck.
- Minimize backing as much as possible. Backing leads to more incidents than when moving forward.
- Always wear your seatbelt when operating any type of vehicle or heavy equipment.

