

Many accidents involve the use of heavy equipment and machinery, and many of these accidents occur because a spotter was not used.

Every jobsite is different, so the utilization of a spotter will be site-specific.

Every worksite has its own specific hazards that present risks to operators and field workers.

These hazards include **uneven ground conditions** and terrain which present risk for equipment rollover and workers losing their footing.

Other hazards include **underground utilities and overhead power lines** or other structures. It is important to conduct a **Hazard Assessment** prior to the start of work.

Hazard Assessment considerations:

- Types of accidents involving the use of heavy equipment and machinery.
- Hazards that are site-specific, and present risk to equipment operators and field workers.
- **Every facility must conduct a Hazard Assessment.**
- Before operating machinery, perform a walk-around as part of the Hazard Assessment.
- Every worker must know their responsibilities and receive proper training.
- All workers must wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Before beginning any operation of machinery, the operator and spotter must perform a walk-around as part of the Hazard Assessment. This will give the operator and spotter time to discuss the equipment and review the lines of travel.

During the operation of equipment, the operator and spotter **must always maintain visual contact with one another**. The use of a two-way radio may be beneficial but should not be relied upon as there is a possibility of losing communication.

The operator should give all signals in a clear and precise manner that will be understood by the operator. **In all cases, the operator must take guidance from the spotter.** If there is ever an emergency, all equipment must be shut down and the situation re-evaluated before continuing operation.

Every worker must receive proper training, understand their responsibilities, and follow established rules and regulations. **The spotter must wear appropriate PPE** which could include a high-visibility safety vest, high-visibility gloves, safety footwear and a hardhat. The spotter must be dedicated to the task and not be distracted while performing their job. Safety is the most important factor, and if properly observed everyone will go home at the end of the workday.

As always, be safe out there!