

Overview

A skid steer loader is a compact, versatile piece of equipment used for digging, lifting, grading and material handling. Its small size allows it to operate in tight spaces, but this can also increase the risk of incidents if not operated safely.

Dangers & Hazards

Skid steers can become a hazard when not operated properly or when operating the skid steer near workers.

Potential hazards when operating a skid steer:

- Rollovers due to uneven ground, slopes or overloading
- Crush injuries from pinch points, especially when entering or exiting the machine
- Struck-by incidents involving workers, structures or other equipment
- Improper use of attachments such as forks, augers and buckets.
- Limited visibility causing collisions or runovers
- Hydraulic failures leading to unexpected movement
- Noise and vibration exposure affecting operator health

Saskatchewan Legislation

Under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020*, employers and workers must:

- Ensure equipment is maintained and safe to operate
- Provide adequate training and supervision (per table 11 of OH&S regulations)
- Identify and control workplace hazards
- Ensure operators are competent
- Use equipment according to the manufacturer's specifications

Engineering Controls

- Ensure the machine has ROPS/FOPS (rollover/falling object protection)
- Use backup alarms and lights, and cameras if equipped

Administrative Controls

- Only trained and authorized personnel are allowed to operate skid steers
- Follow safe work procedures and manufacturer guidelines
- Establish communication methods (hand signals, spotters)
- Keep a safe distance between equipment and workers

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Hard hat, High-visibility vest, steel-toe boots, hearing protection, gloves (as required)

Key Safety Reminders

- Always wear seatbelt during skid steer operation
- Always keep hands and feet inside the cab
- Do not carry passengers
- Travel with the bucket low to the ground
- Avoid steep slopes and unstable surfaces
- Always check the surrounding area before backing up or turning
- Keep bystanders at a safe distance
- Never exit the machine when the engine is running or the machine's loader arm or attachments are raised
- Shut down properly before exiting the machine
- Report defects or unsafe conditions immediately