Entering and Exiting Vehicles Safely Meeting Kit



Truckers, delivery drivers, farmers, firefighters, and workers that drive or ride in large commercial trucks and vans, farm equipment, and fire apparatus get injured when they enter and exit vehicles unsafely.

THE SAFEST METHOD FOR ENTERING AND EXITING A VEHICLE OR EQUIPMENT – 3 POINT RULE

The recommend practice is the 3-point rule. This means always having at least three points of contact with the equipment – two hands & one foot or one hand & two feet. Following the 3-point rule will provide you with the most stability, and therefore reduce the risk of slips and falls.

DANGERS ON THE GROUND FOR WORKERS

Vehicle safety is important in a variety of jobs. All employees should be alert to these dangers on the ground:

- Mud, ice and potholes can create slip-and-fall hazards.
- Traffic hazards can endanger police officers and employees in work zones.
- Wet or icy parking lots can create risk for any employee.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY TIPS

- Do not mount and dismount when equipment is in motion.
- Never jump off equipment.
- Face towards the machine when entering or exiting.
- Do not break your three points of contact until you reach your destination: the ground, the vehicle’s cab, or the platform.
- Keep your movements slow and steady as you enter and exit.
- Be extra cautious in wet, snowy, or icy conditions.
- Wear appropriate footwear with adequate support and slip resistance for the weather conditions and the equipment surfaces.
- Avoid loose or bulky clothing as it could get caught in the equipment or interfere with your contact points.
- Don’t step on tires or wheel hubs. Don’t use the door frame or edge as a handhold.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Employers can help reduce the risk of these injuries by evaluating vehicles and equipment. Do they all have adequate steps, non-slip surfaces, and hand holds? Are these surfaces all in good condition? Do you inspect them on a regular basis? Have you considered displaying decals near the entry and exit points to remind your workers to use three points of contact?

TRAINING

Training on safe entering and exiting should be conducted with all new employees. But also remember to provide reminders to veteran employees to help reinforce the safety techniques – especially as winter weather arrives.

NO JUMPING OFF HAZARD

Jumping increases the force and strain on your bones and joints (mostly ankle, knee, and back). For example, in a cab-over-engine tractor, jumping from the top step can apply 7.1 times your body weight to your back and leg joints (1420 pounds of force for a 200-pound person). Jumping from a delivery step-van with a package in hand causes an impact of 3.5 times the body weight plus package weight.

ESSENTIAL WORK PRACTICES IN ENTERING AND EXITING A VEHICLE

To enter the left/driver's side, stand on your left leg and lift your right leg up. You may need to change hand and feet positions while entering and exiting. Keep three points of contact with the vehicle at all times (one hand and two feet, or two hands and one foot). To avoid falling out backwards, maintain the three-point rule until you are securely seated or firmly on the ground.

To exit the vehicle, examine the ground before you step out. Look for ice, water, cracks, and uneven surfaces. Face the vehicle and step down backward while holding onto the grab bar or other stable surface. Use all of the steps until you reach the ground. Don't use some of the stairs, then jump and hurt yourself by skipping one. Never jump down or "fall" down forward out of a vehicle; you can catch your clothing on the door handle, seat adjustments, seat belt, etc. causing a serious, uncontrolled fall.

BEST SAFETY PROCEDURES TO GET ON AND OFF EQUIPMENT

1. Check that the machine is equipped with grab rails and steps. (If possible, add stickers to remind workers about safe procedure and mark grab rails and steps.)
2. Scrape mud off shoes before climbing onto the machine. Also, keep steps and grips clear of mud, grease and other hazards.
3. Face the machine as you step onto the first step. Maintain 3-point contact at all times (two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand). Use the surfaces the manufacturer designed for mounting and dismounting—steps, running boards, traction strips, footholds and hand grips.
4. Climb into the cab or other areas that have non-slip surfaces.
5. To get off the machine, be sure the machine is first parked and stable. Shut off the machine if necessary.
6. Step out of the cab or off of the machine—while facing the machine, use the provided surfaces to climb down, always maintaining 3-point contact. Do not jump from equipment! Jumping is dangerous to bones and joints.
7. Only break 3-point contact with the machine when you reach the ground.

FINAL WORD

It sounds rudimentary, but statistics say otherwise. OSHA says that 50% of truck driver injuries resulting in strains and sprains are falls from a truck – with an average of 13 days off work to recover.