

NRMCA Monthly Safety Initiative

Volume 3, Issue 9



Working Around Concrete Pumps... Safely

Concrete Pump Safety

Concrete pumps come in various shapes and sizes. They are typically matched to the jobsite size and configuration. The one thing they all have in common is operating under high pressure. Add that to large machinery, moving ready mixed concrete trucks, weather conditions, and congested construction sites mean that anyone working around a concrete pump needs to be well informed and ever vigilant of all safety issues.



What to Know About Safety and Concrete Pumps on the Jobsite

A concrete delivery professional must understand that communication is an essential part of safety when it comes to working around concrete pumps. Look for specific instructions on the delivery ticket and any unique jobsite conditions. Wearing full PPE, dismount from your truck and coordinate with the pump operator on discharge rate, air entering the hopper, blowback, emergency stop procedures and driver to and from pump operator communications. Always use a spotter (with proper hand signals) to back into or away from a pump. Never drive under the boom of a pump. Watch out for pump outriggers at head height and dunnage pads as trip hazards. Never stand on pump hoses or lines. Be mindful of your footing especially with uneven ground or oily surfaces. Pump booms should be no closer than 20 feet to a power line. Never look downward into the pump hopper. Always stand as far away as possible and off to the side to monitor the flow of concrete into the hopper. Do not allow the pump to suck air into the pump and at the same time do not overfill the hopper. Air in the lines can cause the hose to whip violently causing serious injury. Only the pump operator or assistant should clear any clogged lines or chunks of concrete that enter the hopper. Never rinse off chutes into the hopper, unless agreed to by the pump operator. Use kevlar wraps around pump pipe couplings and angles when possible to prevent injury if a blowout occurs.

Concrete Pump Safety Do's and Don'ts

- Think First when working around concrete pumps
- Wear proper PPE including hard hat, eye protection, gloves, and high-vis vest
- Walk and survey the jobsite before entering and ensure pump boom is away from power lines
- Be careful of pump outriggers
- Be mindful of pump stability
- Communicate with pump operator on hand signals and emergency actions
- Use a spotter when backing up to or from a pump
- Always back up slowly, with caution, especially with more than one mixer at the pump
- Never stand between a pump and another moving vehicle
- View amount of concrete in the hopper from a distance and be mindful of blowback



Resources

NRMCA: [Working Safely Around Concrete Pumps](#)

NRMCA: [Power Line Safety for Ready Mixed Concrete Drivers](#)

Contacts

Gary Mullings: gmullings@nrmca.org

Kevin Walgenbach: kwalgenbach@nrmca.org

