

# NRMCA Monthly Safety Initiative

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## Loader Safety – Take A Load Off

### Safety and the Ready Mixed Concrete Industry

Front-end loaders are a vital piece of equipment for the ready mixed concrete industry to operate smoothly and successfully. They are the workhorse of all ready mixed concrete plants, tasked with moving materials, loading material hoppers, plant cleaning, and much, much more. However, just like with any other piece of equipment or machinery, they come with risks. Front-end loaders have been known to be involved with property damage, serious injuries and even death at ready mixed concrete plants. In order to ensure loaders are used effectively and safely, there are a number of things to remember before, during and after using a loader.



### What to Know About Loader Safety

Before using a loader always plan to conduct pre- and post-trip inspections and follow any required warm-up and cool-down procedures. Maintain the loader in good working condition, as per the operator's manual, as there are many different types of loaders. Always observe lockout/tagout procedures when performing maintenance on a loader. When moving materials enter stockpiles squarely, carry the materials in the low bucket position, and remember to drive up inclines and back down declines. Only move heavy objects that do not exceed the loader lifting capacity. Slings, cables, chains, and other attachments shall be inspected prior to use. If using a loader to clear out sedimentation ponds, remember to follow plant procedures for managing the material, cleaning the loader after making contact with the pond material, and ensuring any process water only flows back into the pond. Operators should look primarily in the direction of travel, monitor blind spots, and ensure backing alarm is in working condition. Always make sure loader operators are trained properly and have read the operator's manual.

### Loader Safety Do's and Don'ts

- Think first, before operating a loader
- Do not use a phone while operating a loader
- Operate cautiously, especially around power lines
- Always wear a seatbelt
- Use 3-points of contact when entering/exiting a loader
- Know the loader controls
- Only ride in the cab, and drive slowly
- When backing use an alarm, go slow and stay alert
- Never use the bucket to raise or lower personnel
- Never allow anyone to walk under a raised bucket
- Never exceed the loader lifting capacity
- Use care when operating on ramps, inclines, and side slopes



### Resources

NRMCA: [Front-End Loader Safety Program](#)

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