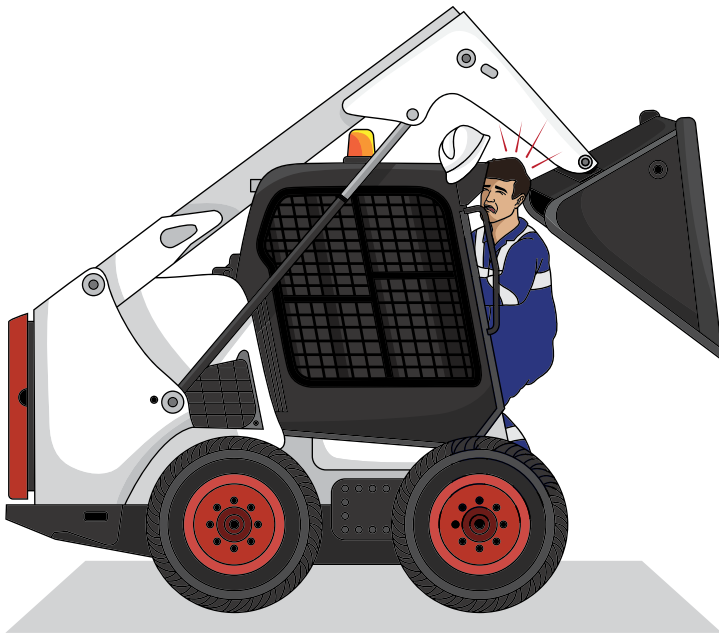


Don't Override Safety Devices

TJ Larkin • Larkin Communication

Employees intentionally disable one-third of all safety devices installed on machinery.



Worker bypassed safety devices and was injured.

An employee was climbing into a running skid-steer loader.

He put his hand on the loader seat to support his body.

He slipped and his foot accidentally pressed the foot pedal, raising the lift arms.

The bucket elevated and pinned his head against the roof edge.

This incident was a near miss and could have been fatal.

The employee disabled three safety devices.

1 The loader will not operate unless the seat belt is buckled.
He buckled it permanently behind the driver's seat.

2 The loader will not operate unless the restraint bar is lowered.
He disconnected the restraint bar wiring to the ignition.

3 The loader will not operate unless the driver is sitting in the seat. At least 35 pounds of pressure must be applied to the seat for operation.
When entering the cab, he supported his weight by pressing his hand against the seat instead of using the hand grips.

This Safety Minute was prepared by Larkin Communication (www.larkin.biz) in partnership with CEP.
For more information, download the expanded PDF online at www.aiche.org/cep.

Talking Points and References

Let's talk about the safety devices in our area that we know are bypassed.

If we bypassed these safety devices for a good reason, can we modify the machinery to better meet our needs?

If we bypassed a safety device for no good reason, let's remove the bypass and get the safety device working properly again before someone gets injured or killed.

Near miss on a skid-steer loader

A skid-steer loader is small, quick-moving, and powerful, making it a versatile and potentially dangerous piece of equipment.

As shown on the first page of this Safety Minute, When a worker inadvertently hit the foot pedals while boarding a loader, the bucket was activated and pinned him against the roof's edge of the cab. The incident could have been fatal.

WorkSafe NB, "Hazard Alert: Worker Injured When Bypassing Safety Devices," <https://www.worksafenb.ca/docs/worker-injured-when-bypassing-safety-devices.html> (Oct. 2014).

One-third of all safety devices are disabled

A German-based project team studied intentional overrides of safety devices in machinery. The team examined 200 pieces of machinery and collected data from a questionnaire circulated to 1,000 occupational safety experts. Results showed that one-third of all safety devices on machines were disabled.

Section on Machine and System Safety of the International Social Security Association (IVSS), "Prevent Defeating of Safeguards on Machinery," <https://stop-defeating.org/en> (accessed Oct. 2, 2020).

Skid-steer loader fatalities

A report from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) studied skid-steer loader fatalities. Using research from three safety organizations, the researchers found around 8 fatalities occur each year in the U.S. due to incidents involving this piece of machinery.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "NIOSH Alert: Preventing Injuries and Deaths from Skid-Steer Loaders," DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2011-128, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2011-128/default.html> (Dec. 2010).

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