

USE OF DUMPERS

Dumpers are involved in around a third of construction transport accidents, causing many deaths and serious injuries, particularly to drivers.

The three main causes of dumper accidents are:

- Overturning on slopes and at the edges of excavations, embankments, etc.
- Inadequately maintained braking systems.
- Driver error due to lack of experience and training, e.g. failure to apply the parking brake, switch off the engine and remove the keys before leaving the drivers seat.

All dumpers should be fitted with Roll Over Protection (ROPS) and seat belts as a minimum.

- Stop blocks should be positioned a safe distance from the edges of excavations, pits, spoil heaps, etc., to prevent dumpers falling during tipping or tipping be under the direction of a banksman.
- Edges of roadways and tipping points supported where necessary to prevent collapse and provided with physical protection to prevent vehicles running off.

Drivers should always:

- ✓ Read the manufacturer's instruction book before operating any unfamiliar plant.
- ✓ Understand the differences in performance when loaded and unloaded, particularly relating to braking and stability on slopes.
- ✓ Know the different handling and braking characteristics of the vehicle in wet or icy conditions.
- ✓ Check tyres, brakes, etc., to ensure dumpers are safe to use at the start of the working day.
- ✓ Use seat belts and ROPS.
- ✓ Check that nobody is at risk of injury before moving off, particularly in the area obscured by the skip when reversing.
- ✓ Keep to designated vehicle routes and follow site speeds rules.
- ✓ Follow directions given by traffic signs and signallers.
- ✓ Load only on level ground with the parking brake applied.
- ✓ Get off the dumper when it is being loaded and ensure that the skip is not overloaded.
- ✓ Check that loads are evenly distributed and that they do not obscure visibility from the driving position.
- ✓ Stop, select neutral gear and apply parking brake, when the machine is tipping into excavations while stationary.
- ✓ Use proper towing pins with jump out restraints (not bent pieces of reinforcement bar).
- ✓ Apply the parking brake, switch off the engine and remove the key when leaving the drivers seat.

Drivers should:

- ✗ NEVER drive on gradients steeper than those specified as safe for the specific dumper in the manufacturer's instructions.
- ✗ NEVER operate the site dumper's controls unless seated in the driving position.
- ✗ NEVER carry passengers unless purpose built seats are provided.
- ✗ NEVER drive around site with the skip in the vertical discharge position.
- ✗ NEVER alter tyre pressures outside the manufacturer's specifications
- ✗ NEVER operate whilst unfit to drive due to the influence of alcohol or drugs