

2024-06-03 TBT Unloading Trailers

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Every day, a significant amount of materials, tools, equipment, etc., are transported and offloaded at construction sites all around the world. While the task of taking a load off of a trailer is usually a straightforward process, there are many things to consider. Just like any other task, there needs to be proper preplanning to ensure a safe and efficient process.

Preplanning the Unloading Process

There are many things that need to be considered before the load just shows up on the site. Proper preplanning and communication with all those involved in the task are critical to ensure the process of receiving loads at the job site goes smoothly.

Two major items to consider:

1. **The load itself-** What exactly is showing up on each trailer, and how is it loaded? What tools, equipment, personnel, etc., will be needed to get the load off of the trailer safely? Work with the trucking company ahead of time to understand how the load is being shipped and what is required to get the load off the trailer at the job site.
2. **Driver expectations-** Do the drivers of the trucks coming onto the site understand what is expected of them? Things such as the entry point to the site, days and times someone is on site to off-load them, PPE requirements, truck and trailer requirements, phone numbers, hazards, etc., are just some items that need to be discussed with the trucking companies delivering materials. An effective way to communicate these items is to provide a site plan document to the trucking company stating any important information needed for the drivers. The drivers should then review and sign the document and have it with them when they come onto the site. It is necessary to state the importance of safety to the drivers while they are at your worksite.

Common Hazards When Unloading Trailers

There are plenty of hazards that should be considered when unloading trailers. Variables such as worksite setup, equipment used, material being offloaded, type of trailer, etc., will determine what the specific hazards are for the task. There are common hazards for unloading activities that can be mentioned here:

- Struck-by hazards are one of the biggest concerns during a work task that involves unloading a trailer. There can be many struck-by hazards, including the actual load or moving equipment.
- Slips, trips, and falls also are a concern. Climbing on and off the trailer poses fall hazards to those individuals assisting in offloading. Poor

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