

Toolbox Talk

Excavators



**WATERWAY
RECOVERY
GROUP**

On WRG sites excavators can only be operated by trained operatives. This means volunteers who have been trained in the use of excavators by someone who is an instructor under the WRG Drivers Authorisation Scheme. Only when you have completed your training and have been deemed safe may you operate an excavator on a WRG site. It is important to organise your site so as to segregate pedestrians and excavators. Excavators used must be carefully selected for that specific job.

WRG Excavator Categories

Category	Description
9a	180deg Excavator
9b	JCB3 and Equivalents
10a	360deg Excavators <7T
10b	360deg Excavator >7T

Excavator Hazards

Most severe incidents occur when the excavator is:

- Moving - particularly when reversing
- Slewing - Trapping a person between the excavator and a building
- Working - When a moving bucket or attachments strike a passing pedestrian or falls off.

Controlling the Risks

Exclusion Zones: An area should be set up around where the excavator is working to deter people from entering, appropriate signs should be put up and all volunteers should be made aware.

Visibility: Excavators should be chosen with the best view around them from the drivers side. They should also be equipped with appropriate visibility aids so driver knows areas where people may be at risk.

Signallers: A signaller or banksman should be provided in a safe area where the driver can see them but are far enough away not to be harmed.

Bucket Attachments: Quick hitches can be used to secure buckets to the excavator arm. Check that you are able to implement and manage any quick hitch used and check that it is securely fastened

Training and Competence

On site everyone should be trained in some way or another about being around excavators, not just the driver.

- **Drivers:** should be trained, competent and authorised to operate the specific excavator.
- **Signallers:** should be trained, competent and authorised to direct excavator movements and, where possible, provided with a protected position from which they can work in safety; and
- **Pedestrians:** should be instructed in safe pedestrian routes on site and the procedure for making drivers aware of their presence.

Inspection and Maintenance

- Authorised drivers will carry out a set of checks prior to use.
- Maintenance is essential especially if the vehicle is not used much. So grease it!
- Return keys to the "nominated" place.
- If it will be parked up for a long time then minimise the amount of ram exposed.

GOLDEN RULES

- Do not drive if you are unhappy with any aspect of the plant or the job.
- Driver is legally responsible for ensuring the vehicle is safe and up to the job.
- Lots of different vehicles – check you know all about the one you are going to operate.
- Working near water - extra care required.
- Practice makes perfect.