



Today's discussion is from the Fireline Safety Category.

DOZER/TRACTOR PLOW OPERATIONS

Dozers/tractor plows provide suppression and support capability for fire operations. When working on or around dozers on the fireline, it is important to respect the following guidelines:

- Load/unload equipment from the transport in a safe manner on a level, stable surface.
- Park transport in an area free of fuel. Clear an area if needed to protect parked equipment.
- Do not sit or bed down near equipment. Walk around the equipment before starting or moving it.
- Lower the dozer blade and/or fire plow to the ground when the equipment is idling or stopped.
- When working a dozer or tractor plow, stay at least 100 feet in front or 50 feet behind the equipment.
- Allow no one but the operator to ride on the equipment.
- Never get on or off equipment while it is moving.
- Provide front and rear lights for equipment working at night or in heavy smoke.
- Provide lights and fluorescent vests to personnel working with dozer/tractor plow units.
- Use hand signals for direction and safety. (See Fireline Handbook Appendix A or IRPG pg 91, for hand signals.)
- Do not use a dozer or tractor plow without a canopy or brush guard and radio communications.
- Operators will wear required PPE and carry a fire shelter.
- Be aware of different fuel types, rates of spread, and flammability.
- Watch for wetlands, steep slopes, rocks, ditches, and other obstacles that might stop the equipment.
- Do not get too far ahead of a firing crew during firing operations.
- Anchor the line to a secure firebreak and create a black line (burn out) until the fire is completely enclosed.
- Tractor plow operators should wear headgear protection for head, face, eyes, and ears while also providing radio reception and ventilation capabilities.
- Tractor plow crews should consist of a minimum of two people.
- When the dozer or tractor plow is equipped with a hand-clutch lever, always take equipment out of gear when mounting and dismounting.

References:

[Safety and Occupational Health Manual Handbook, BLM--1112-1](#)
[Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations](#)
[Incident Response Pocket Guide](#)

Have an idea? Have feedback? Share it.

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