

Recent research indicates that the most common cause of injury—sometimes fatal—for logging equipment operators is slipping and falling from mobile equipment or log trucks. These injuries are often attributed to improper dismounting techniques and failure to use appropriate equipment handrails and steps. All of these injuries are preventable if employees use the appropriate features as they were intended.

Mounting mobile equipment and log trucks is not as much a problem as dismounting. For the most part, employees use the appropriate steps and handrails when mounting the machine or truck. When mounting mobile equipment and log trucks, employees readily use the three-point method to get on or in the machine or truck.

The three-point method is the use at all times of at least three contact points when mounting a machine. The basic principle is to face the machine, grab the handrails or other stable balance point with two hands, place a foot on a step, pulling up with the use of both hands and one foot; or reach with one hand while grasping an approved handhold with the other hand and firmly placing both feet on steps or ladders. The object is to have a combination of two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand always in contact with steps, handrails, or other stable surface. (Do not carry items such as a jacket, lunch box, thermos or coffee cup in your hands as you mount or dismount. Lay them on the floorboard and reach for them after mounting or dismounting.)

Most injuries occur when dismounting. Sometimes employees jump down from equipment rather than using the steps and handrails. The correct dismounting method must include exiting backward (facing the machine) and maintaining three-point contact until touching the ground.

To enhance overall safety and prevent injuries caused by falling from mobile equipment and log trucks, emphasize the following points:

- Instruct employees to check the physical condition of handholds and footholds and walking surfaces prior to mounting the machine, and keep these surfaces clean and free of debris.
- Instruct employees not to use steering wheels, controls, and other inappropriate handholds.
- Instruct employees on the use of the three-point method for mounting and dismounting mobile equipment and log trucks.
- Point out the potential injuries associated with the act of improperly exiting from a truck or logging machine.
 - Sprained ankles
 - Pulled muscles
 - Puncture Wounds
 - Broken bones
 - Death
- Explain potential hazards when performing maintenance on mobile equipment and log trucks.

Prepared by the Southwide Safety Committee of the Forest Resources Association Inc.

Please follow equipment manufacturers' recommendations for safe operation and maintenance procedures.