

Skid-Steer Loader Daily Inspection and Maintenance

Maintenance work must be done at regular intervals. Failure to do so will result in excessive wear and early failures. Most manufacturers post a service schedule on the machine; this will help you perform correct maintenance of your loader. A daily inspection should include:

- Engine oil level
- Hydraulic/hydrostatic fluid level
- Engine air filter, check air system for damage or leaks
- Engine coolant level, check system for damage or leaks
- Operator cab and cab mounting hardware
- Seat belt
- Seat bar and control interlocks
- Grease pivot pins
- Tires, check for wear, damage, correct pressure
- Fuel filter, remove trapped water
- Loose or broken parts, repair or replace as necessary
- Safety treads and safety signs (decals), replace as necessary
- Lift arm support device, replace if damaged

Following are some safety tips to keep in mind:

- Balance is the key to the stability and turning capability of a skid steer. With no load in the bucket, roughly two-thirds of the weight is on the rear axles. Weight shifts to the front wheels when the bucket is loaded.
- Overloading can make a skid steer excessively front heavy. This reduces stability and handling response. Don't exceed a loader's rated operating capacity.
- Never attempt to operate the steering levers or any other hydraulic controls while standing outside of the cab! Hydrostatic drive means that the skid steer will respond instantly when the levers are engaged.
- Operation of controls becomes almost instinctive for an experienced skid steer driver. Novices can become confused as a result of having to perform a number of functions at one time. If this happens, it is usually best to remove hands and feet from the controls. All machine functions will stop when pressure on the controls is released.
- Never remove the rollover protective structure from a skid steer. Keep side screens in place—fatal crushing injuries have occurred when individuals were caught between the loader arms and the skid steer frame on "unscreened" machines.
- The seat belt and seat bar should be employed whenever you are operating a skid steer.
- Always make sure that attachment locking devices are in place, even if you are switching attachments for only a few minutes. If not locked, an attachment could break free and roll back down the loader arms, or fall onto a bystander.

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P.O. Box 571 • 75481 Road 435 • Lexington, NE 68850 • 308-324-5553 • 800-248-5523

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