

What's the Risk?

Parking Hot Mobile Equipment



THE ISSUE

Fires caused by parking hot mobile equipment are common yet easy to prevent.



WHAT'S THE RISK?

When hot mobile equipment is parked in (or near) a building, or in a dry combustible field of hay or straw, the potential for a fire igniting on the machine increases significantly. Vehicle fires can quickly grow in intensity due to the machine components and the presence of grease and oil. Gone are the days when most mobile equipment was made of steel and other non-combustible materials. Many side panels and outer shells of newer equipment is lightweight plastic that burns quickly and has a high combustion rate. Plastics not only burn hotter, but they also burn fast, causing fires that escalate rapidly. A fire that starts on mobile equipment can quickly spread to nearby combustibles.



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

- Remove chafe or dust from the equipment regularly, but most importantly when the equipment is going to be left for a period (e.g., lunch, end of the day)
- Never park hot equipment inside a barn or near a building
- When hot equipment is parked in a field, blow down the machine
- Park hot equipment away from combustible material
- Maintain equipment regularly to avoid overheated bearings or friction areas (overheated bearings can quickly cause dust or chafe to ignite)
- Permanently attach a fire extinguisher to any mobile equipment in an area where it is easy to access and maintain. Maintenance of fire extinguishers on mobile equipment is critical since the motion of the machine can impact the operation of the extinguisher causing the extinguishant inside the canister to become packed to the bottom. The fire extinguisher should be removed from its mounting bracket, inverted, and then tapped with a rubber mallet to loosen the extinguishant. Never hit an extinguisher with anything other than a rubber mallet.

