

Mobile Equipment Blowdown

OVER ►

A common incident that occurs at wood pellet plants and sawmills is mobile equipment catching on fire. This happens too often and can be avoided with regularly scheduled and effective machine blowdown.

It is crucial to keep the engine compartment in mobile equipment from accumulating wood dust build-up to help mitigate possible fires or dust flash fires that could cause harm to you, the equipment and fellow workers.

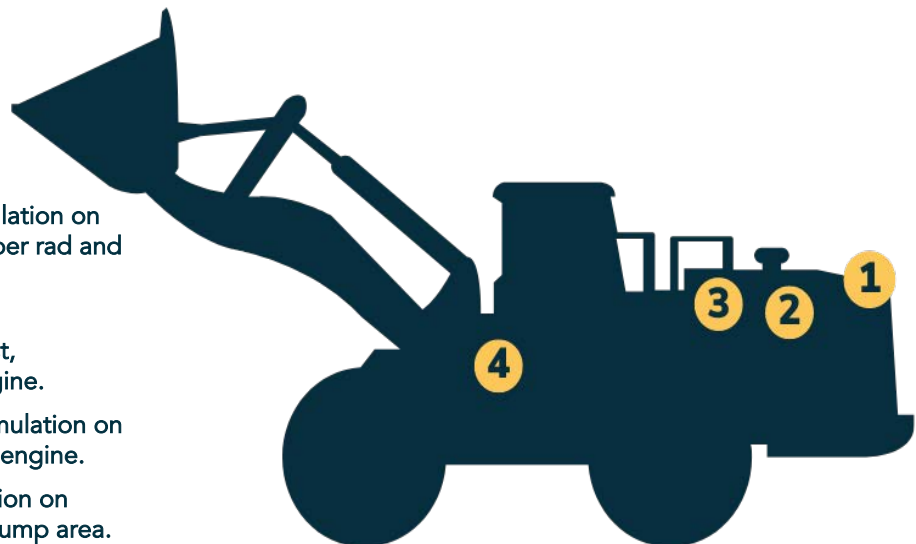
Depending on how dusty the environment is, mobile equipment working with wood fibre should be blown down every two to four hours but also adjusted to suit specific circumstances.

What are your responsibilities as an equipment operator?

- **Know what PPE and blowdown supplies are needed**
- **Know and follow the Mobile Lockout Procedure**
- **Know the Safe Blowdown Procedure and what to do if a fire occurs**

High Risk Areas

1. Radiator Area - Dust accumulation on top of radiator, between upper rad and panel.
2. Engine Compartment - Dust accumulation around exhaust, transmission cooler, rear engine.
3. Doghouse Area - Dust accumulation on top of transmission and rear engine.
4. Under Cab - Dust accumulation on transmission and hydraulic pump area.



BC Forest Safety

Safety is **good** business

Mobile Equipment Blowdown



Equipment operators should follow Safe Work Procedures (SWPs) including the Mobile Equipment Blowdown SWPs. If you are unsure about your task, stop and ask your supervisor for help.

BLOWDOWN STATION SUPPLIES

- Shovel
- Air hose with air wand
- Chocks
- Portable steps/ladder
- Water hose (where applicable)
- 20lb fire extinguisher (on the ground)

BLOWDOWN PPE

- Hardhat
- Safety glasses /Goggles
- Gloves
- Hi-vis vest
- Steel-toed footwear

MOBILE EQUIPMENT LOCK OUT PROCEDURE

Lock out the equipment as per the mobile equipment lock out procedures including chocking wheels and blocking the bucket, if safe to do so.

BLOWDOWN PROCEDURE

1. Verify the machine's fire suppression system and fire extinguisher are charged.
2. Walk around the mobile equipment and inspect for any smolders. If no smolders are found, begin the blowdown. **DO NOT BLOW DOWN IF YOU FIND SMOLDERS - SEEK HELP.**
3. Use water / fire hoses to wet (mist) down the area around the equipment before you start the blowdown. This helps to put out any embers that may come from the engine.
4. Start the blowdown on the front of the machine. This will allow time for the 10 minute cool down period to complete.
5. Ensure you blow out under the lift cylinders pockets. Any build up could result in broken cylinders.
6. Clean the entire outside of the mobile equipment.
7. Open the radiator guard and blow out the inner and outer radiators.
8. Open the engine compartment and blow out the entire engine.
9. Document the time of the mobile equipment blowdown on your pre-use inspection.

IF A FIRE OCCURS

1. Stop the blowdown and call for support to help you extinguish the fire. Be sure to communicate your location.
2. Do not drive the machine to any other area and do not leave the machine unattended.
3. Use the chemical fire extinguisher to suppress the fire. If it is unsafe to get the fire extinguisher from the machine, get a fire extinguisher from the blowdown station.
4. Once it is determined the fire is out, place a hot work permit on the machine and take thermal imaging readings to determine if there are any hot spots. Continue to monitor as per the hot work permit procedures.
5. All fires and smolders must be reported immediately to your supervisor and investigated.



Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to access all BCFSC Crew Talks and to subscribe.