

14 tips to prevent logging equipment fires

As a professional logger, you understand the dangers and cost of equipment fires. Most equipment fires start because of debris accumulation, oil or fuel buildup from leaks and spills, faulty electrical components, overheating brakes, and flammable material buildup around rotating drive shafts.

Fortunately, it only takes about 20 minutes a day to reduce the risk of fire to your machinery by following these tips:

1. Always follow the manufacturer's routine maintenance and service guidelines.
2. Clean the equipment often:
 - **Once a day or more:** Clean debris out of the engine and mechanical compartments.
 - **Once a week:** Clean accumulated leaves, debris, spilled fuel, etc. from the engine and transmission compartments. Also inspect wiring and battery connections, repairing and replacing them if necessary.
 - **Once a month:** Pressure wash or steam clean the machinery.
3. Clean the machine and, if necessary, wet the work area with water before using a cutting or welding device.
4. Maintain the engine and hydraulic cooling system to avoid overheating.
5. Do not keep flammable items in the operator's compartment.
6. Do not transport flammable liquids on the machine.
7. Shut off the engine before fueling.
8. Do not smoke within 50 feet of fueling areas.
9. Immediately clean any fuel, oil, and grease spills.
10. When shutting down, engage the battery disconnect switch if you have one.
11. Observe machines for 15-20 minutes after shutdown to ensure proper cool down.
12. Maintain at least 50 feet between machines in a clear area when parked at shutdown.
13. Maintain an approved fire extinguisher, and properly secure it to your machinery.
14. Employ only qualified operators who have been trained to use fire suppression equipment.

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