

Safe Use of Vehicles - The Hazards

Tutorial Ten

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992/1999 and PUWER, golf clubs have a responsibility to identify all hazards and mitigate the risks.

In general terms, the Regulations require that equipment provided for use at work is: suitable for the intended use; safe for use; maintained in a safe condition and, in certain circumstances, inspected to ensure this remains the case; used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training and, accompanied by suitable safety measures, e.g. protective devices, markings, warnings.

Golf clubs are never flat, or very rarely, and also require complicated manoeuvres to ensure all areas of the course are safely cut. The hazards associated with course machinery activities should be identified by the club in a formal risk assessment and should cover the use of all cutting and mobile machinery. The type of equipment to consider will be:

- Use of all cutting machinery
- Use of tractors
- Use of buggies
- Use of trailers
- Use of any other vehicles

The purpose of the risk assessment is to determine the following:

- What are the particular slopes and angle of descent/ascent?
- What are the difficult areas and risks to manoeuvre?
- Identify any steep drop offs.

- Identify any ditches or holes in the ground.
- Identify any on road areas and crossings.
- Identify any interactions with golfers or the public.

Once the risk assessment is completed there should ideally be a series of findings that identify concerns with the type of vehicle utilised or the specification of the vehicle to carry out the task. In addition, some of the findings may be that the routing of the vehicles could be improved to lower the risks.

Some of the measures to eliminate or reduce the risks will be:

- Fitting of Roll Over Protection (ROP) with seat belts.
- Using a different vehicle on steep slopes or on edges of tees.
- Fitting of edges to bridges, where the bridge is narrow for the vehicle.
- Elimination of wrong types on buggies.
- Improved routings to avoid main roads and crossings.
- Fitting of better guards.
- Use vehicles with better gearings for difficult areas.
- Protection of the vehicle from golf ball impacts.

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Tip of the Month

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HANDS FREE!

At the Bandon Dunes and Pacific Dunes courses, on the Oregon Coast, which are "walking-only" golf courses, a greenkeeper pulls a trolley that carries his bunker rake, where all of the bunkers are raked by hand; edging tools, for edging around the sprinkler heads and tee yardage plaques; fairway soil, seed and compost/fertiliser mixture in one of the larger buckets.

A second larger bucket is used for discarded tee and fairway divots and occasional discarded paper debris left by golfers. The smaller bucket can be used for a second soil, seed and compost/fertiliser mixture for the tees or for carrying small tools.

A roll of hose can also be placed around the handle when hand watering of the turf surfaces is required.

Do you have a tip that has helped you in your day-to-day work on the golf course? If so, why not share it with other greenkeepers. Please send any tips you feel would benefit your fellow readers to us either by post at BIGGA HOUSE or by email to gareth@bigga.co.uk.