

**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION**

MSU DAWG TRACKS

It is important to have the right tools for the job. Tools may be more than hammers, wrenches and saws; they can also include UTVs, heavy equipment, and vehicles. To ensure this type of tool is safe to operate, regular pre-operation inspections are essential.

Most importantly, regular inspections ensure the safety of workers. You can get projects done on time and with peace of mind, knowing your equipment is in good condition. When it comes down to it, there is no reason to NOT have routine inspections and get the most out of the equipment and vehicle that is an essential tool in your job.

When & how often should equipment be inspected?

Equipment/vehicle inspections should always be performed BEFORE its use. How the equipment is used can help determine the frequency of these inspections. A few examples ...

- Hard work and long miles:
 - A tractor, picker or combine is being used hard all day long; it would be wise to check everything before starting that morning & then check the fluids again halfway through the day.
 - Nobody likes to be broke down on the side of the road or late for a meeting because of vehicle problems. A thorough inspection before you leave on a trip, can help prevent unexpected delays.
- Multiple operators: A piece of equipment/vehicle used by multiple people should be inspected by each operator before it is used. You would not want to be responsible for a problem someone else caused earlier.

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What should be inspected?

Operator manuals will have a list of items to be inspected. This will usually include at least fluid levels, control functions, and lights. It is always a good idea to do a visual walk-around too, to look for any structural damage and tire condition.

Document your equipment/vehicle inspection problems found & tell the supervisor. If an inspection reveals a safety issue, it should not be used until repaired.

Benefits of routine equipment/vehicle inspections...

- Stay safe – Equipment and vehicles that are in top condition are safer to work with. Failed brakes, blowout of a tire, loss of control's function or any such malfunction of a component could cause property damage or injury to an operator or other by-stander. Pre-use inspections can help reveal warning signs and fix small issues before they turn into a safety hazard.
- Save time - When equipment/vehicles fail, the workflow gets interrupted, and you might not be able to stick to your schedule and meet deadlines. Inspections can help reveal small problems before they become big problems, giving time to order parts or schedule a service call for a mechanic.
- Save money - You will be able to make a repair before it leads to a much more expensive problem. Small repairs are often worth the time and cost less because equipment and vehicles are not cheap to replace, it only makes sense to properly maintain something so valuable.

Sources:

<https://www.macallister.com/importance-of-equipment-inspections>
<https://www.thechecker.net/stories/blog>