



## ISRI Recommended Industry Safety Practice

An ISRI Safety Council Recommendation

Adopted by ISRI Board on April 7, 2008

### Opening Roll Off Container Doors

#### Introduction

Roll off containers pose a unique risk of serious injury if proper precautions are not taken while they are being opened. The weight inside the container can exert enormous force against all sides of the container, including the doors in the rear. When the latch on the doors is released, that pressure can cause the door panel to fly open with enough force to cause serious injury.

Another serious risk involves contact with overhead power lines.

#### Primary Hazards

Impact injury from swinging door  
Crushing injury from falling scrap  
Contact with overhead power lines

#### Primary Safety Solutions

Adherence to opening procedures  
Personal protective equipment

#### Opening Procedures

#### Short Roll Off Trucks

1. Back or move the truck into the area where the material is to be unloaded.
2. Before backing into position, review the area where the load is to be dumped to insure there is ample room. Remove the tarp from the load.
  - a. **Be sure that the vehicle remains at least 10 feet away from any overhead power lines.**
  - b. Be sure to utilize fall protection if working without guard rails while more than 6 feet off the working surface.
3. Make sure the area is free from objects that might puncture the tires, and the ground is reasonably level.
4. Allow room in the area unloading for the door swing, and for standing room to open the container door.
  - a. If large areas of water are present, use good judgment in unloading or standing in the water.

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*\*\* Disclaimer – Recommended Industry Safety Practices (RISP's) are simply practices recommended by the ISRI Safety Council. They are not necessarily the only practices either necessary, or appropriate, with respect to the applicable equipment, activity or operation. These recommended practices are designed to serve as guidelines for members, for their consideration as appropriate, and not intended to replace OSHA requirements, manufacturers' specifications, or either company- or facility-specific requirements, practices or guidelines \*\**

5. If unloading inside a building or overhead structure, make sure there is enough overhead clearance and no obstructions are present near the area to unload.
6. If possible, relieve pressure from the door.
  - a. Pull the truck forward and apply the brakes to slide the load forward.
  - b. If necessary, use a crane to relieve pressure on the doors by redistributing the load.
7. Exit the truck maintaining three point contact and walk to the rear of the truck and container. Remove the ratchet straps used to secure the box.
8. While standing just behind the ratchet or locking mechanism remove the safety chain from its secured position. Begin releasing the door locking mechanism.
9. Once the door is completely released, it may come open suddenly, so remain clear of the door and the materials that can push the door open.
  - a. Never push the door open by hand to prevent possible injury to arms and hands
10. Once the door is opened, return to the cab of the truck, using three point contact while entering the cab.
11. Move the truck into position to dump the load. Check all mirrors and areas around each side of the truck to make sure there are no people close enough to be harmed should the box roll off to one side.
12. Engage the PTO. Begin dumping the load. Be sure to watch the container to avoid shifting during unloading. Should the container shift, lower it immediately.
13. Once the load is dumped, move the truck forward away from the pile. Allow room to secure the container safely.
14. Exit the truck maintaining three point contact and proceed to the rear of the truck.
15. Make certain the box is empty. If empty, secure the door and reattach the lock down straps on the rear of the box.
16. Re-enter the truck cab, again using three point contact and proceed to the scales to light weigh.

### Roll-off Trailers

1. When unloading long boxes that do not have to be lifted to move the container to the end of the rails for unloading, the same procedure for unloading short trucks should be used.
2. Before unloading roll off trailers with air ride suspension, be sure to dump the airbags to stabilize the trailer and prevent the trailer leaning from side to side during unloading.
3. If unloading short containers that have to be shifted to the rear of the trailer rails, extra care must be given because the weight of the load will be pressing against the door.
4. Utilize the same method for opening the container door as used with the short truck, while remaining aware of the load shift.
5. Utilize the tool developed for this task to prevent injury to hands and arms.