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SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURE

DITCH WITCH

The instructions recommended within this document apply to normal risk conditions. If the Ditch Witch is to be operated in a dangerous or hostile environment, the user/client hiring this equipment from Pirie Hire Pty Ltd is responsible for conducting an appropriate risk analysis, and applying suitable controls to mitigate those additional risks.

GENERAL SAFETY

- The Ditch Witch can only be operated if it is in a safe and sound operating condition by a competent operator.
- No smoking, drugs or alcohol is permitted.
- Operator must stay within the safe operating load limits of the machine.
- Ensure all operating functions are working prior to use.
- Operator to wear appropriate PPE (safety footwear, ear protection etc).
- Worksites on or near roads must have separation from the flow of traffic.
- Operation of unit is best on firm and level ground.
- Do not wear loose clothing or jewellery.
- Ensure adequate fresh air is available if using machine in an enclosed area.
- Check to ensure there are no underground services at the point of the bore.
- Do not leave machine unattended while still in operation.
- Switch off machine before refuelling.





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OPERATING CONDITIONS

- Carry out a visual inspection on wheels, controls, attachments, and hoses prior to use.
- Ensure you receive basic instructions on starting machine & operating functions.
- Make sure ground conditions are suitable to support machine and load.
- Do not drive machine with attachment raised or raise the attachment unless machine is on level ground.
- Carry attachment as low as possible, and manoeuvre slowly to avoid tipping.
- Maintain proper tyre pressure as per manufacture specifications.
- Switch machine off when not being operated.
- Do not allow children to operate the machine, and always ensure area is clear when starting up in case of accidental movements.
- Ensure there is adequate turning room and space to manoeuvre machine in the work area.
- Sound horn when moving through a doorway or turning a blind corner.
- Always park the machine on a flat slope.
- Use smooth motions when operating hydraulic levers to avoid unexpected movements from machine.
- Never operate near observers or other people. Keep an eye out for blind spots.
- Never use the machine to move fuel vessels.
- Never use machine in confined spaces.
- Never open radiator cap when machine is running or hot.
- Refer to operator's manual for all other requirements.
- Load and unload on a flat level surface only, and always ensure trailer is connected to a vehicle.
- Beware of moving chain at all times, serious injury can occur.
- Do not dig into rocky ground as the trenching chain can get caught and cause serious injury.
- When loading onto the trailer always keep machine level. Failure to do this may cause it to stall.
- Check for underground services before trenching.
- Ensure all guards and covers are in place before use.
- Never disconnect hydraulic lines while machine is turned on as this can cause serious injury or death.



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PARKING

- Park where there will be no obstruction to vehicles, site personnel or access ways.
- Do not impede road traffic and post reflective warning signs where possible.
- Ground attachment and switch off machine as shown below:

INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

- If on extended hire, Ditch Witch and mechanisms are to be inspected regularly. Servicing and repairs are to be organised by Pirie Hire Pty Ltd.
- Operator to carry out daily inspections of fuel, wheels, chain etc. Operator is to check, and top up fluid levels (engine oil, hydraulic oil and coolant), as required also.
- If any damage is done to the machine, cease use and contact Pirie Hire Pty Ltd for inspection.

The above instructions must be followed at all times. If any one of these instructions are not possible, contact the Pirie Hire staff immediately for assistance.

For a basic tutorial on the operation of a Ditch Witch, watch this clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdtib4YU1Rk>



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DITCH WITCH RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Area/Hazard	Consequence	Likelihood	Controls
Ditch Witch striking somebody <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile Plant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious Injury Fatality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up an exclusion zone around machine while operating Communication where possible Do not exceed machine operating limits and specifications Operate to the weather conditions Slow, steady operation of hydraulic controls
Machine contacting underground cables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious Injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlikely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operator to assess area and use a spotter when overhead powerlines nearby Dial before you dig to ensure there are no underground cables or pipes
Hearing loss and asphyxiation from exhaust fumes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term hearing damage Breathing issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlikely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear hearing protection Avoid operation in enclosed spaces If necessary, wear a respirator in confined areas
Explosion or fire when refuelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrical/Static 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious Injury Fatality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlikely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Switch machine off before refuelling Avoid fuel touching hot engine parts Ensure fuel cap is sealed correctly
Falling while operating machine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manual technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor Injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlikely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always maintain 2 points of contact with hands when using machine Ensure machine is switched off when people are near attachment to avoid accidental hydraulic movement
Machine tipping over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious Injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate to the conditions and within the machines specified limitations Always drive machine up or down a slope, NOT along it Slow, steady operation of the hydraulic controls Keep attachment as close to the ground as possible