

Safety Bugle

Today's Topic: Fork Lift Safety



Ten Steps to Fork Lift Safety

1. Train the Operator

All Fork Lift operators must be trained and evaluated as required by 29 CFR 1910.178(1) before using any Fork Lift or other Power Industrial Vehicles.

2. Load and Unload Correctly

- Set the brakes and put wheel blocks on trucks, trailers or railroad cars to keep them from moving.
- Before driving onto trucks, trailers or railroad cars, check the floors for breaks or weaknesses.
- Secure dockboards or bridgeplates before you drive over them, and never exceed their rated capacity. Handle only those loads that are within the rated capacity of the truck.
- When stacking or tiering, use only enough backward tilt to stabilize the load.

3. Learn the Rules for Batteries and Fuel Tanks

Always turn off the engine when filling fuel tanks. If you spill any fuel, immediately clean it up. Disconnect the battery before doing any electrical repairs.

4. Make Routine Checks

Complete a daily operator's checklist prior to operation. If any truck has mechanical problems, don't use it. Immediately report and correct any defects found.



5. Drive Safely

- Wear the seatbelt or restraint provided.
- Obey all traffic rules, including speed limits.
- Keep at least three truck lengths between you and the truck ahead.

- Keep the truck under control at all times.
- If the load obstructs your view drive with the load trailing.
- Always look in the direction of your path of travel and keep a clear view.
- Use a spotter or safety observer.
- Don't run over loose objects on the road.

6. Don't Leave a Truck Unattended

If you leave a truck, make sure the load-engaging means is fully lowered, controls are neutralized, power shut off, and the brakes set. A powered industrial truck is considered unattended when the operator is 25 feet or more away from the vehicle, and it is still in view, or when it is not in the operator's view, no matter how far away he is.

7. Keep up With Repairs and Maintenance

If a powered industrial truck needs repair, is defective or is in any way unsafe, immediately take the truck out of service until it is fixed. Only authorized personnel should make repairs. Do not make any modifications to the forklift without prior written approval from the manufacturer.

8. Watch for Pedestrians

Never drive a truck up to a person standing in front of a bench or other fixed object. Don't let anyone stand or pass under the elevated portion of a truck, whether it is loaded or empty. Do not let unauthorized persons ride on powered industrial trucks.

9. Watch Those Ramps, Too

- Raise the forks only as far as necessary to clear the road surface.
- When ascending or descending grades in excess of 10 percent, drive with the load facing uphill.
- On all grades, tilt back the load

10. Keep It Clean

Keep industrial trucks clean and free of dirt, excess oil and grease. Use only noncombustible agents to clean trucks.