

HELP REDUCE THE RISK OF 7 TYPES OF FORKLIFT ACCIDENTS



Forklifts are industrial tools that, if not properly operated and maintained, can lead to an increased risk of personal injury or costly damage to equipment, infrastructure and goods.

Here are seven types of forklift accidents and some of the steps you can take to help reduce risk.

COLLISIONS



- Arrange your warehouse space thoughtfully
- Separate forklifts and pedestrians where possible
- Consider, depending on your application, implementing facility dress requirements and forklift features such as high-visibility vests and pedestrian awareness lights
- Invest in collision protection by placing barriers, such as safety rails and bollards, at strategic locations
- Provide spacious parking areas with clear markings
- Evaluate the use of speed limits or speed-limiting features in high-pedestrian traffic area

FALL FROM A HEIGHT



- Raise people using only equipment specifically intended for that purpose
- Provide ladders, scaffolding or aerial work platforms and monitor for proper utilization
- Use proper fall protection for each piece of equipment

PHYSICAL INJURIES



- Provide enough free space around the lifting equipment for pedestrians to maintain at least three feet between them and a stopped truck (farther if the truck is moving)
- Use physical or symbolic pedestrian barriers
- Implement policies and practices to reduce distractions, such as prohibiting mobile phones or walkie-talkie use while operating
- Keep arms and legs inside the forklift cab during operation
- Always enter and exit the forklift facing the cab to maintain three points of contact

EMISSIONS HAZARDS



- Provide adequate ventilation if operating an internal combustion engine (ICE) forklift indoors or in enclosed spaces
- Avoid excessive idling when operating an ICE forklift in an enclosed space
- Turn off the engine when staying inside a small, confined area like a trailer
- Use carbon monoxide monitors when operating ICE forklifts in enclosed spaces
- If the area of operation does not have adequate ventilation, use electric forklifts only
- Charge lead acid batteries in a designated, well-ventilated space



FALLING LOADS

- Provide wide, well-marked traffic lanes for forklifts
- Avoid sharp turns and moving, lifting or tilting the mast abruptly (some operator assistance systems can help enforce this)
- Install safety rails if necessary or netting on the backs of racking if necessary to help prevent loads from being pushed off into adjacent aisles
- Secure loads of loose items carefully
- Center all forklift loads and spread the forks as wide apart as the load permits
- Confirm forks are not bent or damaged – this can make the load uneven
- Use a load backrest to prevent items from falling onto the operator compartment
- Always travel with the load upgrade

TIPPING OVER



- Adhere to the forklift's maximum load capacity
- Stack loads correctly, with the weight evenly distributed
- Don't travel with the load elevated
- Avoid sharp bends, uneven surfaces and steep slopes, and travel slowly when turning
- Introduce and enforce speed limits (a forklift speed limiter can help with enforcement)
- Consider operator assistance systems that help reduce the risk of tipovers
- Ensure forklift capacity plate reflects the current attachment

TECHNICAL MALFUNCTION



- Follow manufacturer's periodic maintenance schedule and recommendations
- Conduct thorough pre-shift inspection before each shift
- When maintaining lift trucks, use only parts approved by the original equipment manufacturer
- Do not make any modifications or additions to the truck that affect the capacity, stability or safe operation without prior written approval from the manufacturer



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