

Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting



Home Healthy - Home Safe

Date: April 2022

Forklift Safety

OSHA estimates forklifts cause about 85 fatal accidents per year, 34,900 accidents result in serious injury, and 61,800 are classified as non-serious. 42% of forklift operator deaths are documented as the operator not wearing a seatbelt. As you can see from the statistics; something we use almost every day can become very dangerous if used/operated in an unsafe manner.

Complacency and lack of training are some of the biggest factors in forklift incidents. Just because you operated forklifts for years does not mean you should not pay attention to hazards and limitations related to forklift use. Training is required before operating so let your supervisor know if they assign you to a task that you are not trained in and/or have no experience doing.

Guidelines for Safe Forklift Operation

- Inspect the forklift every day/shift before use. Document inspections in accordance with the AISH 19 Procedure.
- Always wear your seatbelt.
- DO NOT operate a forklift unless you have been trained and certified to do so.
- Use extreme caution on grades, ramps, or in adverse weather.
- Travel backward with the load if you cannot see in front of you.
- Always check your path of travel to make sure the path is clear and remains clear.
- Check overhead hazards such as overhead powerlines or clearances you must move underneath.
- Use a spotter in tight or high traffic areas.
- Sound the horn as you approach and while you turn around blind corners.
- Secure all loads on the forklift to prevent falling objects.
- Use Jibs or manufacturer attachments that are secured to the forklift mast. Do not rig off forklift forks.

HEALTHY OR SAFETY REMINDER: In the United States 1 forklift operator dies on an average every 3 days. Most deaths occur from the operator jumping from the lift truck as it is rolling over. (OSHA)

Site supervisors and Foreman need to verify the crew members who are going to be operating a forklift have been trained and certified. If training is needed contact your safety representative for assistance.

Discussion Points/Quiz Questions:

1. Can you operate a forklift if you have not been trained or certified?
2. When is a good time to use a spotter while operating a forklift?
3. What do you do if you find a problem or damage on a forklift during your per-use inspection?