

The Supervisor's Guide To

OSHA
REGULATIONStoday's
topic:**FORKLIFTS****SAFETY MEETING SCRIPT**

Let's Talk About Forklift Safety

“In an accident report on file with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, a worker at a junk yard was killed when he was run over and crushed by a forklift.

The forklift operator who ran over the victim had more than 10 years of experience. However, the forklift he was using had operator cab windows that were more than 6 feet from the ground and the victim was less than 5' 6" tall. The back-up alarm was not heard by either the operator or the victim.

This is just one example of the many kinds of forklift accidents that can happen. In fact, hitting pedestrians accounts for about one out of every four forklift accidents. This is something every forklift operator should know how to avoid. Unless you have received this information, as well as thorough training and certification, you are not permitted to operate a forklift.

A Look At Forklift Basics

Today, I want to talk to you about some forklift safety basics:

- ✓ Never drive up to anyone standing in front of a bench or other fixed object.
- ✓ Never allow another employee (or other person) to stand or pass under the elevated portion of any forklift, regardless of whether it is loaded or empty.
- ✓ Never allow unauthorized employees to ride on a forklift unless there is a safe place to ride and riding has been authorized.
- ✓ Operators (and others) should never place their arms or legs between the uprights of the mast or outside the running lines of a forklift.

The Unattended Forklift

✓ When you leave a forklift unattended, completely lower the load engaging means, neutralize the controls, shut off the power and set the brakes. In addition, if you park the forklift on an incline, block the wheels.

Let me take a minute to explain what I mean by “unattended.” A forklift is considered to be unattended whenever the operator is 25

feet or more away from the forklift, which remains in his or her view, or whenever the operator leaves the vehicle and it is not in his or her view.

✓ When a forklift operator is dismounted and within 25 feet of the forklift still in his or her view, the load engaging means must be fully lowered, the controls neutralized and the brakes set to prevent movement.

✓ You must maintain a safe distance from the edge of ramps or platforms while on any elevated dock, platform or freight car. Never use a forklift to open or close freight doors.

✓ Set the brakes and block the wheels to prevent forklifts, trailers or railroad cars from moving during loading or unloading. Fixed jacks may be necessary to support a semi-trailer during loading or unloading when the trailer is not coupled to a tractor. Also, check the flooring of forklifts, trailers and railroad cars for breaks and weakness before driving onto them.

✓ Make sure there is sufficient headroom under overhead installations, lights, pipes, sprinkler systems, etc. Also make sure an overhead guard is used as protection against falling objects. (It should be noted that an overhead guard is designed only as protection from the impact of small packages, boxes, bagged material, etc., not to withstand the impact of a falling capacity load.)

✓ Use a load backrest extension whenever necessary to minimize the possibility of the load or part of it from falling rearward.

✓ Use only approved forklifts in hazardous locations.

✓ Always stay alert and watch out for others.

✓ Monitor the condition of the forklift and the area in which you are working.

✓ Wear safety equipment where needed.

Forklifts can be dangerous. Even if you are not authorized to operate one, you still need to exercise extreme caution around them. For example, always respect warning signs of an approaching forklift. Listen for horns and make sure you watch for any warning lights.

Thanks for your attention.

Have a safe day.”