

## OSHA and Forklifts

You won't find an OSHA standard about forklifts. They call them "Powered Industrial Trucks," and are covered by OSHA 1910.178 in Materials Handling & Storage. OSHA requires that all users be trained on the lift that they will be operating; and that operators also be re-evaluated every three years.

**There are an estimated 35,000 serious injuries associated with forklift accidents each year.**

## Types of Forklift Accidents

- **42%** - crushed by forklift tipping over
- **25%** - crushed between forklift and another surface
- **11%** - run-over by forklift
- **11%** - crushed between 2 vehicles
- **8%** - struck by falling vehicle
- **4%** - falling from the cab

According to OSHA, approximately 70% of all forklift accidents could have been prevented by following standard safety practices and procedures.



## Forklifts & Safe Operation

### Rules of The Road – A Refresher

Forklifts are one of the marvels of the industrial age. They have allowed for significant advancements in production and distribution speed throughout the supply chain, and allow for more efficient transport of heavy objects. However, they require special training and additional safety considerations to avoid incidents.

Take a few minutes and review these guidelines:

- Always use your seatbelt.
- Always look before backing up.
- Use a spotter when visibility is impaired.
- Always make sure the dock plate is secure.
- Avoid sharp turns.
- Cross railroad tracks on the diagonal to prevent damage to wheels and to keep the load from slipping.
- Authorized operators only.
- No horseplay; forklifts are not toys.
- Drive in reverse if the load blocks your view (except up slopes)
- Keep to the right when driving unless layout or conditions indicate otherwise.
- Keep your arms, legs, head and feet inside the forklift when driving.
- Never drive with the forks up, or use the forklift to push other vehicles.

- Never pass a forklift going in the same direction, in blind spots, intersections or other congested areas.
- Obey speed limits, floor markings and any other road signs.
- Give yourself plenty of room to stop.
- Use extra care on slick or wet surfaces; forklifts require additional stopping room.
- Stay at least three vehicle lengths behind the vehicle ahead of you.
- When driving on an incline with a load, always travel with the load pointing uphill.
- When driving on an incline with no load, always travel with the forks pointing downhill.
- When you come to blind corners slow down, stop if needed, and sound the horn.
- Use wall and ceiling mirrors to help you see around corners.
- Report any and all crashes to your supervisor.
- When you park your forklift, fully lower the forks, put the controls in neutral, turn off the engine, check the parking brake, and remove the key.

Practice proper operating techniques and procedures, and always err on the side of safety. Don't learn by accident!

**Contact Safe Workforce today for your safety and training needs!**