

Forklift Safety for Supervisors



Supervisor's responsibilities

- > Ensure new employees understand the requirement for *specific equipment* training. Forklifts (we use 5 classes (or OSHA classifications) of forklifts here at the UW).
- > Make sure new forklift operators have the proper inspection forms, equipment knowledge and training to operate them safely.
- > Provide instruction whenever there is a change in their job assignments, a **change in equipment or process** that presents a new hazard, or when there is a change in the procedure.

Supervisor's responsibilities

- > **Effectively review compliance and ensure the operator is driving safely. See the Supervisor's Operational Safety Reference handout.**



1. Equipment pre-use inspection

Completed and documented

- > This is required prior to use and at the start of every shift. If more than one operator uses the equipment per shift the second operator gives it a quick once over and signs/initials the original form for the day.**

2. Worksite inspection completed and documented

Part of daily routine

- > This ensures the operator understands the hazards in the workplace and can mitigate them.**
 - Drop offs**
 - Ramps**
 - Pedestrians**
 - Site specific procedures (using horn while traveling)**
 - Equipment specific issues**
 - Electrical hazards**
 - Other issues related to your work area**

3. Inspection items requiring attention

Make sure these are dealt with

- > Anything found to be out of compliance during the inspection should be corrected and documented.**
- > If it is unsafe document it and take it out of service.**
- > Place a “DO NOT USE” sign on the equipment until it is corrected.**
- > Follow up and make sure its corrected**

4. Seatbelts are *REQUIRED*.

- > **Seatbelts are the #1 way to protect workers when an incident occurs. But if it is not the habit of every operator it won't do them any good.**
- > **40% of all forklift fatalities are due to the fact that the operator did not stay with an over turning forklift and tried to exit and was crushed when the forklift overturned.**
- > **The only way to stay with the forklift is to WEAR THE SEATBELT!**

\$60,320 fine

On November 21, 2016, a 60-year-old forklift operator was transferring building supplies from the company's warehouse to a customer's vehicle. When the forklift descended a sloped ramp, a bag of mortar mix fell off of the load and blocked the front right wheel. The operator reversed the forklift to free the bag of mortar and while doing so, turned the steering wheel so that the back wheel went over the edge of the ramp, tipping the five-ton forklift over. The worker attempted to jump out of the cab and was fatally crushed by the forklift.

"This incident could have been prevented had the employer effectively evaluated the workplace for hazards, which would have identified the unguarded edge of the ramp that exposed the forklift to tipping," said Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum. "The worker should have been properly trained to stay seated with the seatbelt fastened in the event of a tip over."



5. Drives at a speed that allows a safe stop.

- > Regardless of the site/conditions or tasks being performed, operators must always be able to stop the equipment in a safe, controlled manner.**



6. Moves the machine safely and smoothly

The forces caused by the motion of a forklift can cause its' stability to become severely reduced. These forces can be limited by keeping the activation speed of the machines parts down and by making smooth and gentle turning/stopping/starting motions as well as smooth mast/boom raising, lowering and tilting movements with or without a load.

A forklift is most unstable *without* a load.

7. Look in the direction of travel before/during movement.

ALWAYS look behind before moving backwards....

- > As soon as the operator puts the transmission in reverse they should look behind them before proceeding.
- > Regardless of direction of travel, operators need to look where they are going first.
- > The majority of the operators attention should be focused in the direction of travel.

8. Sounds horn at cross aisles and blind corners

- > Use it judiciously to allow pedestrians forewarning of a forklift in the area.**

9. Keeps all body parts inside the cab

Head, arms, feet and fingers

- > Especially be aware of the overhead guard finger wrap around.**

10. Handles only secure, safely arranged loads within capacity

Every forklift has a capacity plate and an operators manual (and is required to have one for the vehicle)

- > **It is the operators responsibility to ensure integrity and security of all loads.**
- > **Dismount and arrange.**
- > **NO operation with rear wheel(s) off the ground.**

11. Travels with the load/lifting attachment as low as safely possible

- > All forces that cause instability are increased exponentially when the mast is raised.**
- > The higher the mast, the greater the chance of a tip over.**
- > The best habit is to have the mast at the lowest possible height while traveling regardless if a load is on the machine.**

12. Travels in reverse or uses a spotter when needed

- > When forward vision is obstructed operators should drive in reverse to keep a clear view of path of travel.**
- > Especially advisable if a loose/slippery load may shift during braking.**
- > If having trouble seeing in both forward and reverse directions a spotter is advisable.**

13. Stacks loads straight and squarely

- > When required to stack loads on top of one another, they should be straight and square.**
- > Not doing this could cause leaning loads and potential fall over that could cause injury.**

14. Use proper pedestrian procedures

Pedestrians have the right of way

- > Make sure pedestrians in the area know there are forklifts present and that they have an equal share in responsibility to give or take right of way.**
- > Operators should stop and give a positive motion for pedestrians to proceed.**

15. Travels on grades correctly

Load upgrade always!!!!

- > **Loaded forklifts should always travel with the load upgrade.**
- > **Ensures load security and maximizes traction and braking.**
- > **If the forklift is empty it is advisable to travel with the forks downgrade as the counter weight will be on the uphill side for the same reasons.**
- > **NEVER turn on a sloped grade**
- > **No elevating a load, turning or zig zagging on grades**

16. Follows correct parking /shut down procedures

25 foot rule – turn it OFF!

- > **Lower lifting attachment**
- > **Transmission in neutral**
- > **Set parking brake**
- > **Shut off engine**
- > **Wheels straight – chocked on slopes**
- > **Propane off**
- > **3 point dismount (mount as well – always face the forklift)**

17. Consistently demonstrates alertness, control and safe habits

- > Considered a safe operator, no damage to equipment or loads.**
- > By regulation, those that have close calls or incidents (or worse - injuries) must receive refresher training and driving re-evaluation.**

18. other

Comments or kudos

Recap

- > **Make sure inspections are being performed**
- > **Send drivers to training and make sure it is completed**
- > **Observe operators and correct unsafe behavior**
- > **If employee involved in incident or near miss send for retraining**
- > **Promote safe behaviors**



Questions?

- > **Thanks for coming and keep working safely out there. Let us know if you have any questions when you get back in the field.**