

NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

June 2022

FORKLIFT SAFETY



Forklift violations are regularly on **OSHA's Top 10 list of Most Frequently Cited Standards** year after year.

Employers are responsible for ensuring that every employee operating a forklift is at least 18 years old and has received comprehensive training and certification before operating a forklift.

Training must be conducted by an experienced forklift operator/trainer and must include a combination of formal classroom instruction, pre-operation inspection, and practical skills evaluation. Employers must certify that trainees have successfully completed both a written test and a hands-on performance evaluation. Since certified forklift operators must be re-evaluated every 3 years, a record of the operator's name, date of training, evaluation, and the trainer's name should be kept on file.

Drivers must check the forklift at the beginning of each shift, and if it is found to be unsafe, the matter must be reported immediately to a supervisor, and the forklift will not be put in service again until it has been made safe. Attention must be given to the proper functioning of tires, horn, lights, battery, controller, brakes, steering mechanism, cooling system, and the lift system for forklifts (forks, chains, cable, and limit switches.)

Supervisors should enforce safety guidelines by establishing routes for forklift operation, equipping forklifts with automatic signal alarms to alert nearby workers, and enforcing common sense traffic rules, including:

- Keep to the right on roadways and wide aisles
- Drive at a reasonable speed depending on location and condition of surface
- Make initial eye contact between operator and pedestrian, then yield to pedestrian
- Never lift or transport co-workers with the forks
- Be alert for wet and slippery surfaces
- Don't block traffic when parking
- Always set parking brake, lower forks, and neutralize controls when dismounting.

Create a successful forklift safety program by following the procedures outlined in the OSHA Standards for Powered Industrial Trucks. An effective safety program includes written policies and procedures for forklift inspection and maintenance, safe work practices, traffic management, and general hazard awareness for all employees who work on or near forklifts.

Forklift training is available on-site by NBSIA Safety Specialists Jeremy Hatch and Matt Boughtin.

For more information or to schedule a training, contact memberservices@nbsia.org

Sources:

<https://www.osha.gov/powerd-industrial-trucks/standards>



Contact Us

(707) 428-1830

www.nbsia.org

MemberServices@nbsia.org