

Forklift—Self-Inspection Checklist

Many work-related factors can cause accidents. Forklift accidents are a leading cause of worker injuries, and overturns are the leading cause of fatalities involving forklifts; they represent about 25 percent of all forklift-related deaths. Forklift operators should be trained and certified to operate the specific equipment to which they are assigned.

The following is a list of issues directly affecting the safe operation of forklifts. Supervisors should use this “self-inspection” checklist to determine if any factors apply to their operations and then use that information to create a comprehensive forklift safety program.

Factors of the work organization that can contribute to forklift accidents

	YES	NO	N/A
Is there a lack of training or improper training of workers who operate forklifts?			
Do production factors, such as speed or stress, exist?			
Are the proper tools, attachments or accessories provided on forklifts?			
Are operators properly assigned to the type(s) of forklifts they will be operating?			
Are forklifts properly maintained?			
Are the ages (i.e., years in use, hours in use, etc.) of the forklifts of concern?			

Behavioral and operational factors that can contribute to forklift accidents

	YES	NO	N/A
Do operators use proper warnings to alert others of a forklift in use?			
Is communication between workers an issue?			
Have there been any observed instances of workers riding on forklifts or the load?			
Have there been any observed instances of improperly parked forklifts?			
Have there been any observed instances of improper blocking of wheels on semi-trailers or railway cars?			
Have there been any observed instances of horseplay, stunt driving or jerky or erratic driving?			
Are there any issues with the servicing of forklifts?			

Workplace design factors that can contribute to forklift accidents

	YES	NO	N/A
Do any aisles appear too narrow for forklift operations?			
Are any aisles crowded or cluttered to a point of restricting forklift operations?			
Are there any obstructions at intersections or doors?			
Does it appear that there is a large volume of pedestrian traffic in the work area?			
Are forklifts used in walking and/or working areas?			
Are there any general workplace hazards, such as noise, toxic gases, dust or poor lighting?			
Are ramps used by forklifts made of different surfaces?			
Is the loading dock area kept in good repair?			

Characteristics of the forklift load that can create a hazard

	YES	NO	N/A
Have there been any instances of poorly stacked or piled loads on pallets?			
Are pallets in good repair?			
Have there been any instances when loads were too heavy for the equipment?			
Have there been instances when loads have appeared to be unstable or blocked the driver's vision?			

Mechanical conditions or design features that can increase the risk for forklift accidents

	YES	NO	N/A
Have there been any brake malfunctions?			
Have there been any steering malfunctions?			
Has there been any clutch, shift linkage, or transmission malfunctions?			
Have there been any mast assembly malfunctions?			
Have there been any leaks in hydraulic systems or the transmission?			
Have there been any malfunctions of safety devices?			
Are there any "blind spots" or obstructions on forklifts that can block a driver's view?			
Have there been any driver complaints about poor layout of controls and displays?			

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