

RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Fork Lift Trucks

Introduction

Every year there are 8,000 reportable injuries involving lift truck accidents. Costs of damage to trucks, buildings, plant and stock from all such incidents are substantial, quite apart from the human misery factor.

About half the incidents are caused by operator error, such as careless manoeuvring, speeding and unstable loading but there are many other causes such as badly laid out work places, poor maintenance, and the wrong use of equipment.

Key factors:-

Employers need to consider the following:

- ◆ Are the trucks available capable of carrying out the range of operations required? Conventional counterbalanced trucks are very versatile but some jobs may require specialist equipment, e.g. high reach trucks, side loaders, straddle carriers.
- ◆ Is the work place layout suitable for lift truck operation?
 - Floors and roadways to be smooth surfaced with gradients below 10%.
 - Aisle to be of appropriate width and height and kept clear.
 - Lighting levels to be adequate.
 - Interaction of pedestrians and vehicles to be eliminated or controlled by the use of separate doors and passages, warning signs, mirrors, and safety barriers.
 - Sufficient space to be provided for parking, maintenance and charging.
- Warehouses, storage areas, and work places to be laid out to facilitate handling and truck movement.
- ◆ There should be a clearly defined programme for inspection, servicing and maintenance. Normally this will involve daily checks by operators, with more thorough weekly inspections and detailed servicing by skilled mechanics at least once every six months. A typical daily inspection would include examination of lights, horn, tyres, brakes, steering and lifting mechanisms, and there should be a procedure for notifying any defects.
- Fork Lift Check form attached.
- ◆ Care should be taken in the selection of drivers. They should be responsible and physically fit with adequate vision. Handicapped persons or those with certain medical conditions need not be excluded but medical advice should be sought.
- ◆ The single most important factor in fork truck safety is operator training as accidents are frequently associated with lack of suitable operator training. All operators must be properly trained and there should be an effective system for the documentation of authorised operators. The Health and Safety Commission's Approved Code of Practice sets out requirements for the training of drivers of the most commonly used types of lift trucks and the principles apply equally to all lift trucks.

Compliance with this Code of Practice ensures that the employer has discharged his duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act in respect of lift truck operator training.

The main requirements are:

- Employers to provide adequate instructions, supervision, and training, reassessment of operator competency and requirements for refresher/conversion training.
 - Operator training to be carried out by instructors who have undergone training in instructional techniques on the types of equipment in use.
 - Employees to be given basic training off the job with close on the job supervision (familiarisation training) following basic and specific job training. Training need only cover the equipment to be used and check lists for basic training and testing are given in the Code of Practice.
 - Where possible basic training should be given in a separate, marked manoeuvring area with appropriate loads being provided.
 - Records of training to be kept.
 - It is recommended that training is given by an HSC accredited body such as ITSSAR, CITB, LNTD, NPORS and RTITB. Where there is a continuing requirement for training it is worth considering having an employee trained to be an instructor.
- ◆ Operators should be provided with safety footwear, safety helmets, and where necessary hearing protection, together with protective clothing to suit weather and/or temperature conditions. High visibility or reflective clothing should be considered.
 - ◆ Care should be taken that the equipment is used in accordance with manufacturers specifications and limitations, and is not overloaded.
 - ◆ Passengers must not be carried unless on properly constructed seats or platforms.
 - ◆ Special purpose attachments such as lifting arms must be properly engineered and securely fastened to the machine.
 - ◆ Working and access platforms must be properly designed and securely fastened to the forks. There is an HSE Guidance Note which provides advice on the legal requirements on the design, use and examination of platforms as well as safe systems of work. Persons must not travel on the platform with the platform raised and trapping points on the hoist mechanism should be guarded.
 - ◆ When vehicles are not in use the forks should be lowered and the ignition keys removed.

Further Information

ACOP26 : Rider Operated Lift Trucks - Operator Training.

ACOP and Guidance L113. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.

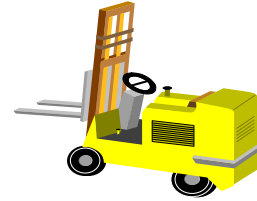
ACOP and Guidance L22. Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

HSE L117 :-Rider Operated Lift Trucks – Operator Training file. (1999 version)

HSG136 : Workplace Transport Safety

7 PM28 : Working platforms on fork lift trucks.

For further assistance on this or any other risk management topic please contact National Risk Control Centre via your Royal & SunAlliance Area Centre or via your insurance adviser.



Lift Truck Checks

This form gives information regarding the extent of the checks and the parts to be examined.

Pre-shift checks on fork lift trucks are a necessary part of the management control system to ensure a safe system of work is maintained.

All forklifts should be monitored for faults. Drivers are fully trained during their forklift course to carry out these checks and it only takes a few minutes to check a truck.

At least once a day preferably at the start of a shift, the attached checks should be carried out by the drivers and authorised by the supervisor. Completed forms should be retained. Any fault found during the check should be rectified before the truck is used.

DRIVER CHECKS

TICK (✓) BOX WHERE APPROPRIATE

VISUAL	PASS	FAIL	PASS	FAIL	OPERATIONAL
1. FORK TIPS					1. HORN
2. FORK BLADES					2. STEERING
3. FORK HEELS					3. HAND BRAKE
4. FORK CARRIAGE					4. FOOT BRAKE
5. FORK STOPS					5. LIFT MECHANISM
6. LIFT CHAINS					6. TILT MECHANISM
7. MAST & HYDRAULIC HOSES					7. FORWARD & REVERSE TRACTION
8. LIFT CARRIAGE					8. OIL LEAKS
9. TILT RAMS & HOSES					9. REVERSING SIREN
10. TYRES & WHEEL NUTS					10. FLASHING WARNING BEACON
11. DRIVERS GUARD					11. LIGHTS (GENERAL)
12. COUNTERWEIGHT					
13. BATTERY ELECTROLYTE					
14. TRANSMISSION FLUID (DIPSTICK)					
15. ENGINE OIL (DIPSTICK)					
16. RADIATOR WATER LEVEL					

- **REPORT ANY DEFECTS IMMEDIATELY**
- **IF IN DOUBT, PARK YOUR TRUCK SAFELY AND SEEK ADVICE FROM YOUR SUPERVISOR.**
- **REMEMBER, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR TRUCK!!!**

DRIVERS SIGNATURE _____

Forklift Ref No. _____

SUPERVISORS SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____