Forklift safety toolbox talk

29 CFR 1910.178, 1926.602

Date _____ Trainer _____ Location _____

Opening question

If someone stepped out from behind a rack right now, would the forklift driver see them in time?

Why it matters

A forklift is heavy, it handles very differently from a car, and its load can block the driver's view. A load dropped from height can crush anything below it. Operators and people on foot share the same aisles, docks and yards, so both sides need to know the rules.

Key points

1. **Only trained and evaluated operators drive**
   Before anyone operates a forklift on their own, the employer must make sure they have successfully completed the required training. If you have not been trained and evaluated on this type of truck, do not climb on, even to move it a few feet. Ask your supervisor if you are not sure whether you are authorized.
   29 CFR 1910.178(l)(1)(ii)

2. **Check the truck before every shift**
   Forklifts must be examined before being placed in service, at least daily, and after each shift when they run around the clock. Check the forks, chains, tires, horn, lights, brakes, steering and look for leaks. If anything affects safety, the truck does not go into service, and the defect gets reported right away.
   29 CFR 1910.178(q)(7)

3. **Know your load and your capacity**
   Only handle loads within the rated capacity of the truck. Read the data plate, and remember that attachments and lift height can change what the truck can safely carry. Put the forks as far under the load as you can and tilt the mast back to steady it. Restack loose or unstable loads before you lift, and take extra care with off-center loads that cannot be centered.
   29 CFR 1910.178(o)(2)

4. **Watch for people on foot**
   Slow down and sound the horn at cross aisles and anywhere your view is blocked. If the load blocks your forward view, drive with the load trailing. Never let anyone stand or walk under raised forks. On foot, put the phone away, make eye contact with the driver before you cross, and stay out of the travel path.
   29 CFR 1910.178(n)(4)

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5 **No riders and no horseplay**

Unauthorized people may not ride on a forklift. Where riding is authorized, a safe place to ride must be provided, and the forks or a pallet are not that place. No stunts or horseplay, ever, and keep your arms and legs inside the truck.

29 CFR 1910.178(m)(3)

6 **Park it the right way**

When you leave a forklift unattended, fully lower the forks, put the controls in neutral, shut off the power and set the brakes. If it is parked on a slope, block the wheels. Do not park where it blocks fire aisles, stairways or fire equipment.

29 CFR 1910.178(m)(5)(i)

Scenario

Picture this: It is the end of a long shift and the dock is backed up. An operator picks up a tall load that blocks the view forward, then drives it nose first toward a cross aisle without slowing down. A coworker steps out from behind a rack with earbuds in, looking at a phone. Nobody hears a horn, because nobody sounded one. What should each of them have done differently?

Crew discussion

1. Where are the blind corners and cross aisles in our building or yard?
2. What do you do if you find a problem during the pre-shift check?
3. How do you find out what a load weighs before you lift it?
4. Where should people on foot walk, and how do drivers and walkers signal each other?

Bottom line **Only trained operators drive, check the truck every shift, stay within the rated capacity, and treat every blind spot as if someone is standing there.**

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Sign-in sheet / Hoja de asistencia

Topic / Tema Forklift safety / Seguridad con montacargas

Date / Fecha _____

Trainer / Instructor _____ Location / Lugar _____ Company / Empresa _____

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