

# Forklifts

## Safety Meeting Packet

### Protect Your Workforce



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that all forklift drivers undergo training by qualified instructors prior to using any forklift. Training programs should be designed to cover all the major movements and proper maintenance of the machinery. A re-training program should also be a consideration for employers. Mandatory re-training should be held regularly for all drivers with special re-training for those employees who mishandle a forklift. Consulting the manufacturer's operation manual along with OSHA guidelines for proper forklift use can provide employers with a head start when establishing a training program. The following will help provide information on the proper use of a forklift.

- The load backrest and forks, including top clip retaining pin and heel
- Finger guards
- Safety decals/nameplates
- If operator manual is on board and legible
- If operator compartment is free of grease and debris
- That all safety devices are working properly

Additional inspections are required by forklift type:

- Electric Forklift: Cables, connectors, battery, restraints, electrolyte levels, and hood latch.
- Internal Combustion Forklifts: Engine levels (oil, coolant), brake reservoir, air filter, belts, hoses, radiator, and hood latch.
- Liquid Propane Forklifts: Tank mount and restraint brackets, pressure relief valve, hoses, connectors, tank (look for dents/cracks), tank fits within truck profile, and leaks.

### Inspection

It is an OSHA requirement that all forklifts be examined at least once a day before being put into service. If the forklift is used around the clock, it must be evaluated after each shift. Creating a daily checkoff for drivers to follow during inspections ensures that inspections are performed properly. Having constant maintenance can keep equipment in better shape for a longer period. This will lower the risk for employers.



### Operational Inspection

Following the pre-operation inspection, the operator should conduct a second inspection while the engine is running. This inspection should check:

- Accelerator linkage
- Inch control (if equipped)
- Brakes
- Steering
- Drive control – forward and reverse
- Tilt control – forward and backward
- Hoist and lowering control
- Attachment control
- Horn, Lights, and Back-up alarm (if equipped)
- Hour meter

### Pre-Operation Inspection

Prior to using the vehicle, the operator should conduct an inspection to determine that the vehicle is appropriate to operate.

At a minimum, the inspection should check:

- Fluid levels
- Hydraulic lines and mast chains for leaks, cracks, or defects
- Tire pressure and condition



## Removal from Service

OSHA requires that any forklift in need of repair, defective, or not in safe operating condition must be removed from service for repairs to be made. Repairs are required to be completed by an authorized individual only.

The Powered Industrial Truck Standard (29 CFR 1910.178) includes three specific situations that require a forklift be placed out of service:

- Leak in the fuel system
- Emission of hazardous sparks or flames from the exhaust system
- Temperature of any part exceeds normal operating temperature

Keep in mind that the three items listed above are not the only factors for removal from service. According to OSHA, “any condition that adversely affects the safety of the vehicle” shall result in the vehicle not being placed in service.

## Operation

Employers should be wary of the potential hazards associated with forklifts. Collisions, falling loads, overturning, and being stuck or crushed are all dangers that pose a major risk to employees. Drivers



should follow the main rules of the road, and must be cautious, especially when carrying a load. Maintaining a clear view is important. If the load blocks the view of the driver, driving in reverse may be the best option. Wearing a seat belt and following from safe distances can help save drivers, should an accident occur. Employers should consider posting warning signs for drivers as extra reminders when it comes to potential hazards.

If the forklift is out of the operator’s view, or in view of the operator but more than 25 feet away, the load engaging means must be fully lowered, the controls must be neutralized, and the brakes must be set. An unattended forklift must also have the power shut off.

The operator must slow down and sound the horn when encountering cross aisles, around corners, or where vision is obstructed. The operator shall not drive the forklift up to anyone standing in front of a fixed object.

Employees working near forklifts must also be aware of their responsibility to maintain a safe workplace. An employee who is not operating the forklift must know:

- He/she is not allowed to stand or pass under the elevated portion of the prongs, whether loaded or empty.
- Unauthorized personnel are not allowed to ride in or on the forklift, unless the employer has authorized riding and provided a safe place to ride.

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For more information, consult the following OSHA standard: 29 CFR 1910.178: Power Industrial Trucks

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## Tips/Reminders

### Do

- Wear seatbelt
- Check for centered load within weight limit
- Keep forks 6-10 inches off the ground when carrying a load
- Use a spotter when visibility is impaired
- Drive in reverse if load blocks view
- Use lights and horn to alert others of your presence
- Give pedestrians the right-of-way

### Don't

- Raise or lower load while moving
- Let anybody walk under a suspended load
- Walk between the forklift and a hard, fixed object
- Allow anyone to ride on the forklift
- Park on an incline
- Allow anyone else to ride with you
- Rush or drive too fast
- Allow unauthorized drivers to operate the forklift



# Forklifts

## Safety Meeting Attendance Acknowledgement

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Department / Division \_\_\_\_\_  
 Meeting Date & Time \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM  
 Meeting Location \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name & Title of Individual Conducting Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

### Key Meeting Discussion Points / Important Reminders:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Internal Procedures Reviewed:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this document, you confirm your attendance at the meeting and acknowledge the issues addressed above!

Employees in Attendance		
(Print): _____	(Print): _____	(Print): _____
(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____
(Print): _____	(Print): _____	(Print): _____
(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____
(Print): _____	(Print): _____	(Print): _____
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(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____
(Print): _____	(Print): _____	(Print): _____
(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____

Employees not present: \_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions/Recommendations to improve workplace safety and health: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Disclaimer:**

The information provided above was assembled using multiple resources. However, these materials do not contain ALL the information available regarding the required safety standards under local, provincial, state, or federal law for your industry.

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