

Proper Lift Truck Operation

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Powered industrial trucks are essential for the quick and easy movement of loads that used to take several workers hours to complete. But like other conveniences that save work and time, forklifts and hy-lifts may be taken for granted. For you, that's a dangerous practice.

When companies select lift truck operators, they consider the competence, dependability, and mental and physical fitness of the individuals. It is then up to you, the smooth operators, to live up to the responsibility that is placed upon you. Smooth operators must know how to operate the trucks carefully and safely and react correctly to every situation.

All smooth operators know the maximum load limit of their lifts and never permit an overload. They are aware that their trucks are to be backed down a ramp, but a load going uphill should be in front. Before backing a lift truck, smooth operators check to see if any co-workers or objects are in their paths.

Remember, pedestrians always have the right of way. The smooth operators check their machines thoroughly before starting them and report malfunctions immediately. Before and after each shift, smooth operators check the brakes, steering, controls, forks, hoist, warming devices and lights.

Forklift masts should be tilted back when the lift is driven. Smooth operators keep their heads, arms and legs inside the truck. The forks are kept about 6 inches above the ground while the truck is being driven. Smooth operators know that a lift is not an elevator for other workers.

Common hazards, such as co-workers working in the area, other truck traffic and poor surface conditions, are recognized by smooth operators. They drive on the right side under normal conditions, avoid quick starts, quick turns and jerky stops, come to a complete stop before reversing direction and watch the distance between other vehicles. Smooth operators are also courteous; they sound their horns when approaching a blind corner or when other workers do not see them.

Driving surfaces are the same potential hazard for all drivers, including lift operators. Smooth operators reduce speed when the surface is rough or slick and do not exceed the height, weight or lifting capacity of the truck. They check

clearance and when loading a truck bed, they know the weight capacity and condition of the bed.

Besides knowing company rules, smooth operators know their machines and the conditions of the job have a sense of safety for themselves and others are able to concentrate on the job at hand, and have a strong sense of pride in their jobs. Smooth operators are the key to safety--they operate the machines properly, efficiently and alertly. Smooth operators keep their cool.

GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

ENDING THE MEETING

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

Comments
