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A SAFER WORKPLACE STARTS HERE

SAFETY SCOOP

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Disclaimer

The information presented in this publication is not a definitive guide to government regulations and **does not** relieve persons using this publication from their **responsibilities under applicable legislation**. The appropriate OHS legislation should be **consulted**.

Individual counselling and advice is available from the Manufacturers' Health & Safety Association.

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Forklifts

Forklift trucks are crucial equipment for the safe and efficient movement of materials in the workplace.

Due to their size and weight, they can cause property damage, severe injury or death when used improperly.

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Complacency

One factor that can lead to incidents is complacency. Some causes of complacency:

- Mind not being on the task
- Fatigue
- Mental Stress
- Boredom on the job
- Repetitive forklift operation without incident
- Overconfidence
- Lack of motivation

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Forklift Fatalities in Alberta

"Worker Fatally Injured when Unstable Load Falls off Forks"

"Worker Crushed by Forklift"

"Nisku Mishap Kills Man"

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5 Ways to Improve Forklift Safety

1) Inspect your forklift before use

- Follow the operator's manual for items to be inspected
- Report deficiencies immediately

Have you read the operator manual?
Does the inspection form include all items from the operator's manual?

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5 Ways to Improve Forklift Safety

2) Ensure loads are secure and within the forklift capacity

- Centre the forks under the load
- Ensure full engagement to the heel of the forks
- Tilt mast back to secure the load
- Restrain loads that could slide off or tip over

Are there any challenging loads at this facility?

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5 Ways to Improve Forklift Safety

3) Slow Down!

- Speeding can reduce reaction time and result in collisions with pedestrians and other equipment

Are there blind corners at this workplace?
What should you do when you approach one?

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5 Ways to Improve Forklift Safety

- Sharp turns at high speed can cause tip overs

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5 Ways to Improve Forklift Safety

- Sudden braking can cause the forklift to tip forward and the load to slide off the forks

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5 Ways to Improve Forklift Safety

4) Look in the direction of travel

- Watch for pedestrians and other moving equipment or obstructions
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times
- Look over **both** shoulders and sound your horn before backing up

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5 Ways to Improve Forklift Safety

- If you can't see over the load, drive in reverse or use a spotter

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5 Ways to Improve Forklift Safety

5) Keep forks low

- Travelling with the forks elevated can block your view and cause instability
- Keep forks low to the ground for improved stability and safety

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Summary

Remember to:

1) **Inspect** your forklift before use
2) Ensure **loads are secure** and within the **forklift capacity**
3) **Slow down** to avoid collisions and tip overs
4) **Look** in the direction of travel
5) Keep **forks low** to the ground

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Conclusion

- Forklift incidents can be avoided by making **good decisions** behind the wheel of the forklift.
- Forklift operators must remain **alert** and never allow themselves to become **complacent**.
- Forklift operators must be **aware of all the hazards** present at the worksite and **review applicable hazard assessments.**
- Forklift operators must be **trained** and **competent.**

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Resources

- Forklift Health & Safety: best practices guideline
- MHSA Forklift Operator Safety Course
- MHSA Forklift Operator Train the Trainer course

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Have Questions? Contact us!

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To register for a course we offer, or to access our other Safety Scoops visit https://www.mhsa.ab.ca/

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Thank you!

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