

Forklift Trucks

Forklift Trucks - Common Factors in Forklift Incidents

On this page

[What factors contribute to forklift trucks incidents?](#)

[What factors of work organization can contribute to forklift trucks incidents?](#)

[What factors can contribute to forklift trucks incidents?](#)

[How can workplace design contribute to forklift trucks incidents?](#)

[What characteristics of the load create a hazard?](#)

[What mechanical conditions or design features increase the risk for forklift incidents?](#)

[How can incidents with pedestrians be reduced or avoided?](#)

What factors contribute to forklift trucks incidents?

Many work-related factors can cause incidents. Grouping them into specific categories may help to analyze incidents and, eventually, to prevent them.

What factors of work organization can contribute to forklift trucks incidents?

- Production factors such as speed or stress.
- Lack of proper tools, attachments and accessories.
- Improper assignment of forklifts and operators.
- Poor maintenance of forklifts.
- Age of forklifts.
- Lack of training or improper training of workers who have to operate forklift trucks.

What factors can contribute to forklift trucks incidents?

- Travelling at excessive speed.
 - Riding with the load elevated.
 - Improper backing up techniques.
 - Improper turning, braking or accelerating.
 - Improper warnings to others about a forklift in use nearby.
 - Poor communication during shared tasks, or in shared spaces.
 - Not being aware of the route to be travelled (e.g., narrow passages, obstacles, poor surface conditions, etc.).
 - Riding or giving rides on forklift or load.
 - Parking the forklift improperly.
 - Improper blocking of wheels on semi-trailers or railway cars.
 - Horseplay; stunt driving; jerky, erratic driving.
 - Inadequate servicing of the forklift.
-

How can workplace design contribute to forklift trucks incidents?

- Narrow aisles.
 - Crowded, cluttered aisles.
 - Shelving that has components that could hit or intrude into the operator area.
 - Obstructions at intersections and doors.
 - Volume of traffic in work area.
 - Pedestrians who are walking and working in the general area of forklift operations.
 - Other workplace conditions such as noise, odours, toxic gases, dust, or poor lighting.
 - Ramps or flooring with different surfaces.
 - Condition of loading dock.
-

What characteristics of the load create a hazard?

- Goods are poorly stacked or piled on the pallet in a way that result in an unstable load.

- Pallets are in poor repair.
 - Load is too heavy.
 - Load is unstable or blocking vision.
-

What mechanical conditions or design features increase the risk for forklift incidents?

- Malfunction of brakes.
 - Malfunction of steering.
 - Malfunction of clutch, shift linkage, or transmission.
 - Malfunction of mast assembly.
 - Leaks in hydraulic systems or transmission.
 - Safety devices lacking, inadequate, or malfunctioning.
 - Emissions from forklifts.
 - Blind spots or obstructions blocking driver's view.
 - Poor layout of controls and displays.
-

How can incidents with pedestrians be reduced or avoided?

- Separate the pedestrian and forklift traffic by creating designated walkways or travel ways.
 - Restrict people from entering areas where the forklift is operating. If not possible, develop safe work procedures to protect workers when they must enter areas where forklifts are operating.
 - Keep a safe distance from the forklift whenever possible.
 - Pedestrians should always let the driver know they are in the area. Make eye contact with the driver to ensure your presence is known.
 - Make sure the area is well lit and there are no obstructions.
 - Be cautious near blind corners, doorways, and narrow aisles. Sound the forklift horn at intersections.
 - Use high-visibility clothing, where appropriate.
 - Limit forklift travel speed.
-

- Do not walk near or under raised forks.
 - Do not load the forklift in a way that restricts the driver's viewing area.
 - Avoid driving forklift near areas where pedestrian traffic is high (e.g., lunch rooms, time clocks, entrances/exits).
-

Fact sheet last revised: 2019-01-28

Disclaimer

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of the information, CCOHS does not guarantee, warrant, represent or undertake that the information provided is correct, accurate or current. CCOHS is not liable for any loss, claim, or demand arising directly or indirectly from any use or reliance upon the information.