

LOSS PREVENTION BULLETIN

FORKLIFT TRAINING REQUIREMENTS New Standards Effective March 1, 1999

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For The Benefit Of Our Clients, Associates and Friends

Overview

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OSHA has finally released new regulations regarding the training of operators of Powered Industry Trucks (forklifts). The standard is effective March 1, 1999, but allows for a phasing in of compliance through the year, with full compliance required by December 1, 1999.

The standard addresses all industrial equipment including:

- ★ Fork Trucks
- ★ Platform Trucks/ Order Pickers
- ★ Industrial Cranes
- ★ Motorized Hand Trucks
- ★ Tractors (Tow, yard, . . .)
- ★ Any other specialized industrial truck powered by electrical motors or an engine.

The standard requires **all** operators including temporary, seasonal, full and part time to be trained **prior** to using the equipment.

The biggest change in this standard is what is to be taught. In the past, OSHA was nonspecific, but this has changed. The training cannot be just classrooms, but rather must include hands-on training. The training must be specific to the equipment and the site. This is particularly important as you cannot hold one training program for all employees who work in different operations and utilize different equipment. You also must retrain employees before allowing them to use other equipment or work in other areas that they have not been trained on.

Frequency of Training

Operators must be trained **prior** to starting to utilize equipment. They must be re-evaluated every 36 months. Operators must be retrained if:

- ★ Operator has been observed operating in an unsafe manner
- ★ Operator has been involved in an accident or near miss incident
- ★ Evaluator deems the operator is not operating safely
- ★ There is a change in equipment or work area.
- ★ Workplace conditions change.

Compliance Time Table

The program requires that new operators placed in service on or after December 1, 1999, be trained through the new program prior to operating any equipment.

Operators that have been trained and certified can continue to operate, but must be retrained in the required subjects prior to December 1, 1999. If training in the past (less than 36 months ago) covered some topics in the new program you can skip those areas. The drivers though, must be evaluated as to their performance, trained in the remaining topics, including work site and equipment specific area, and then certified.

(Note: Employees hired before December 1, 1999, must still be trained before they are allowed to operate the equipment.)

Required Training Topics

Powered industrial truck operators must receive initial training in the following topics, except in topics that the employer can demonstrate are not applicable to safe operation of the truck in the employer's workplace.

Truck-related topics:

- Operating instructions, warnings, and precautions for the types of truck the operator will be authorized to operate;
- Differences between the truck and the automobile;
- Truck controls and instrumentation: where they are located, what they do, and how they work;
- Engine or motor operation;
- Steering and maneuvering;
- Visibility (including restrictions due to loading);
- Fork and attachment adaptation, operation, and use limitations;
- Vehicle capacity;
- Vehicle stability;
- Any vehicle inspection and maintenance that the operator will be required to perform;
- Refueling and/or charging and recharging of batteries;
- Operating limitations;
- Any other operating instructions, warnings, or precautions listed in the operator's manual for the types of vehicle that the employee is being trained to operate.

Workplace-related topics:

- Surface conditions where the vehicle will be operated;
- Composition of loads to be carried and load stability;
- Load manipulation, stacking, and unstacking;
- Pedestrian traffic in areas where the vehicle will be operated;
- Narrow aisles and other restricted places where the vehicle will be operated;
- Hazardous (classified) locations where the vehicle will be operated;
- Ramps and other sloped surfaces that could affect the vehicle's stability;
- Closed environments and other areas where insufficient ventilation or poor vehicle maintenance could cause a buildup of carbon monoxide or diesel exhaust;
- Other unique or potentially hazardous environmental conditions in the workplace that could affect safe operation.