FORKLIFT RISK CHECKLIST

Forklifts are serious industrial tools that provide incredible utility when properly used. Improper set-up, maintenance and operation can cause accidents resulting in injury or costly damage to the equipment, infrastructure and goods. Help reduce risk by working through the checklist below. It helps identify some of the steps you may need to take to avoid the most common forklift accidents in your operation.

// RISK 1: COLLISIONS

Safeguards in and around your site can help your operators avoid collisions

- [ ] Is your warehouse space arranged in a thoughtful manner?
- [ ] Are measures in place to separate vehicles and pedestrians where possible?
- [ ] Have you implemented visual warnings, such as pedestrian awareness lights on forklifts and dress requirements mandating high-visibility vests?
- [ ] Do you have collision protection barriers, such as safety rails and bollards in place at strategic locations?
- [ ] Are there spacious parking areas with clear markings?
- [ ] Have you considered the use of speed limits or speed-limiting features in high-pedestrian traffic areas?

// RISK 2: FALLING LOADS

Forklift and site-based safeguards can help protect against falling loads

- [ ] Are your forklift lanes wide and well-marked?
- [ ] Are operators trained to avoid sharp turns and moving, lifting or tilting the mast abruptly?
- [ ] Are safety rails or netting installed on the backs of racking where necessary to help prevent loads from being pushed off into adjacent aisles?
- [ ] Are operators trained to carefully secure loads of loose items?
- [ ] Are operators trained to center all forklift loads and spread the forks as wide apart as the load permits?
- [ ] Have you examined forks for bends or other damage that could make loads uneven?
- [ ] Is there a load backrest in place to prevent items from falling into the operator compartment?
- [ ] Are operators trained to always travel with the load upgrade?

// RISK 3: FALL FROM A HEIGHT

Operator, supervisor and manager training coupled with proper safety equipment can help minimize risk

- [ ] Are your operators trained to only raise people using equipment specifically intended for that purpose?
- [ ] Are ladders, scaffolding or aerial work platforms available, if required, and are you monitoring for proper use?
- [ ] Do you enforce the use of proper fall protection for each piece of equipment?

// RISK 4: TIPPING OVER

Site layout, commonsense precautions and operator training can help reduce risk

- [ ] Are operators trained to adhere to the forklift's maximum load capacity?
- [ ] Are loads being stacked correctly, with the weight evenly distributed?
- [ ] Are operators trained to lower the forks before starting to move a load?
- [ ] Are operators trained to avoid sharp bends and steep slopes, and to travel slowly when turning?
- [ ] Does your site have enforced speed limits?
- [ ] Have you considered operator assistance systems that can help reduce the risk of tip overs?
- [ ] Do you ensure that forklift capacity plates reflect the limits for current attachments?

// RISK 5: PHYSICAL INJURIES

Proper precautions to protect operators and pedestrians can help mitigate forklift-related injuries

- [ ] Is there enough free space around the lifting equipment for pedestrians to maintain at least three feet between them and a stopped truck (farther for moving trucks)?
- [ ] Do you have physical or symbolic pedestrian barriers in place?
- [ ] Do you have policies and practices in place to reduce distractions, such as prohibiting use of mobile phones or walkie-talkies, during operation?
- [ ] Are operators keeping arms and legs inside the forklift cab during operation?
- [ ] Are operators entering and exiting the forklift facing the cab to maintain three points of contact?

// RISK 6: TECHNICAL MALFUNCTION

Regular service and maintenance can help support forklift safey

- [ ] Are you following your forklift manufacturer's periodic maintenance schedules and recommendations?
- [ ] Are operators conducting thorough pre-shift inspections before each shift?
- [ ] Are you using only parts approved by the original equipment manufacturer for lift truck maintenance?
- [ ] Do you obtain prior written approval from the lift truck manufacturer before making any modifications or additions that affect the capacity, stability or safe operation of your trucks?

// RISK 7: EMISSIONS HAZARDS

Proper site design and operator training can help prevent emissions-related accidents

- [ ] Do your indoor and enclosed spaces have adequate ventilation for the operation of internal combustion engine (ICE) forklifts (if applicable)?
- [ ] Do your operators avoid excessive idling when operating ICE forklifts in enclosed spaces?
- [ ] Are operators trained to turn off the engine when staying inside small, confined spaces (like trailers)?
- [ ] Are enclosed areas where ICE forklifts are operating equipped with carbon monoxide detectors?
- [ ] Do you use only electric forklifts when operating in areas that do not have adequate ventilation?
- [ ] Are you charging your lead acid batteries in a designated, well-ventilated space?

These are just some of the considerations for supporting safety processes in your forklift operations. For training courses and solutions, talk to your local Hyster® dealer.

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