

# OPERATING FORKLIFTS

Forklifts have a high lifting capacity and tight turning ability which makes them extremely unstable. Even a small, counterbalanced forklift will have a counterweight that weighs several tons. Tipping over can easily occur while operating due to improper operation, speed, loading or weight distribution.

**Pedestrian contact is the second most common cause of fatalities associated with forklift operations.**

## ASK YOURSELF

- DO I HAVE THE REQUIRED TRAINING TO OPERATE A FORKLIFT?
- DO I KNOW THE ASSOCIATED RISKS?
- DO I KNOW HOW TO PREVENT RISKS?



**BC Forest Safety**

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# OPERATING FORKLIFTS IN THE WORKPLACE



## REQUIRED FORKLIFT OPERATION TRAINING

- Forklift operators must receive proper training and instruction before operating a forklift.
- Forklift instruction must include competency training by a certified forklift instructor.
- Operators must demonstrate they can conduct a full pre-shift inspection of their equipment to ensure it is in safe operating condition prior to use and know to report any defects immediately.
- Certified operators must receive regular refresher training to maintain their certification.
- Operators must operate the equipment safely, maintain full control and comply with laws governing the operation of equipment. (Part 16 OHSR).

## ASSOCIATED RISKS

- Events that cause a tip-over to happen unexpectedly.
- Operator **must** always be restrained inside the operating cab to prevent being crushed by the weight of the forklift in cases of tip-over.
- Operators **must** ensure they have good visibility of their travel path in whichever direction they are travelling.
- Pedestrians **must** understand forklift operators have limited vision and blind spots. They must be vigilant when walking in a mobile equipment operating area and wear the required Hi-Vis apparel.
- Travel with the forks close to the ground to reduce the severity of injuries to people should contact occur with pedestrians or inside other mobile equipment.

## PREVENTATIVE STEPS

- Do not operate forklifts unless qualified or under the supervision of a qualified instructor.
- Do not engage in horseplay.
- Ensure the forklifts are safe to operate and all safety features are operating by conducting pre-use inspections.
- Ensure forklifts have the rated capacity for the loads being moved.
- All pedestrians must wear the required Hi-Vis apparel when in a mobile equipment area.
- Pedestrians should use designated walkways wherever possible, to separate from mobile equipment traffic.
- Use parabolic mirrors to allow viewing around blind corners.
- Use horn warnings when approaching blind corners.
- Drive at a safe speed to be able to stop if someone steps into your path of travel.

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