

# KENTUCKY HAZ ALERT

To prevent forklift injuries:

- Do not operate a forklift without being certified and trained.
- Forklift operators should wear their safety belts.
- Do not jump from an overturning forklift. Keep your body inside the forklift frame. Ride it out and lean in the opposite direction of the overturn.
- Do not place yourself between two forklifts.
- Do not handle loads that are heavier than the load capacity of the forklift.
- Make sure that the travel path of the forklift is clear from the floor to the height of the load being moved.
- Do not step on elevated loads.
- It is a violation of a Federal law for anyone under 18 years of age to operate a forklift.

## WORKERS KILLED WHILE WORKING WITH FORKLIFTS

During 2009, four workers were killed while working with forklifts. Following are the case descriptions for the four forklift-related deaths:

**Case 1:** A 39-year-old male temporary employee was working in a warehouse placing a roll of carpet padding into a shelving unit. The employee stepped from a ladder onto the pallet that was being raised by a forklift to push the padding into the shelving unit. The pallet then flipped off the forks and the employee fell 12 feet to the concrete floor below. The victim was declared dead at the scene by the coroner.

**Case 2:** A 57-year-old male factory supervisor was killed when the forklift he was operating overturned on him. The supervisor was moving bundled recycled paper within the facility when the load shifted and overturned. The forklift pinned the victim's left arm and neck. The victim was transported to the nearest hospital then transferred to the nearest trauma center where he died four days later.



**Case 3:** A 57-year-old male fork truck driver died after he became caught between two forklifts in a warehouse. The victim's right lower extremities were crushed and he died three days later at the nearest hospital.

**Case 4:** A 65-year old male retail store worker was using a walk-behind hand pallet jack to remove product from a shelf with the forks fully elevated. The pallet struck an apparel rack, which fell off the shelf and hit the employee on the head. The employee was transported to the nearest hospital where he died two days later from blunt force trauma to the head and neck.

**FORK LIFT OPERATORS SHOULD NEVER JUMP FROM AN OVERTURNING FORKLIFT. STAY WITH THE VEHICLE AND LEAN IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION OF THE OVERTURN.**

**DO NOT OPERATE A FORKLIFT WITHOUT BEING CERTIFIED AND TRAINED.**

on the downhill side, the steering wheels won't work as well and the load may tip. The center of gravity of both the load and the forklift should be considered.

Forklift operators should receive formal instruction such as classroom instruction, practical training, and a training evaluation that includes the observation of the operator's performance to become licensed as a forklift driver (OSHA Standard 1910.178(l)(2)(ii)). The operator must also be certified (OSHA Standards 1910.178(l)(6) and 1926.602(d)).

**MAKE SURE THAT THE TRAVEL PATH OF THE FORKLIFT IS CLEAR FROM THE FLOOR TO THE HEIGHT OF THE LOAD BEING MOVED.**

Always look in the direction of travel. If the load blocks your view, travel in reverse. Make sure that there is adequate clearance under beams, lights, sprinklers, and pipes for the forklift and load to pass. Make sure to drive the load in the lowest position.

**DO NOT JUMP FROM AN OVERTURNING FORKLIFT. RIDE IT OUT AND LEAN IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION OF THE OVERTURN.**

**DO NOT STEP ON ELEVATED LOADS.**

Ladders, stairs, scissor lifts, and aerial lifts are preferred for accessing elevated sites. If necessary, a man-box with all four sides guarded may be lifted by the forklift only if the box is secured to the forks with a chain or clamp, the operator stays in the seat, and the worker and operator are able to communicate at all times.

The forklift operator should make sure that the tilt control is locked or secured to prevent the boom from tipping and overturning. Also, the seat belt or lap bar should be used to keep you in your seat in case of an overturn.

**DO NOT PLACE YOURSELF BETWEEN TWO FORKLIFTS.**

**For more information, contact:**

KY Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center (KIPRC)

333 Waller Ave., Suite 206

Lexington, KY 40504

1-800-204-3223 (toll-free)

<http://www.kiprc.uky.edu/face.html>

When traveling, never put yourself outside the forklift frame. Always keep a distance of at least three forklift lengths between you and any forklift traveling in front of you. Never pass a forklift at intersections or in blind spots. Also, never drive a forklift up to anyone in front of a fixed object.

**References:**

1. NIOSH Alert: Preventing injuries and deaths of workers who operate or work near forklifts. DHHS publication No. 2001-109.
2. Department of Labor and Industries, Division of Occupational Safety and Health, State of Washington. Forklift Safety Guide. F417-031-000 (04/07).
3. Powered Industrial Trucks (Forklift) eTool link: <http://osha.gov/dcsp/products/etools/pit/index.html>

**DO NOT HANDLE LOADS THAT ARE HEAVIER THAN THE LOAD CAPACITY OF THE FORKLIFT.**

Make sure that when you are on an incline that the load is on the uphill side. If the load is

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