



Fork Lift Training Program

This sample program was developed to assist Republic Indemnity policyholders provide workplace protection for their employees and to reduce losses resulting from accidents and injuries. Remember, this is only a guide. Your business is unique and therefore you must chart your own course to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The material in this publication is based on principles and techniques developed by occupational safety and health professionals. It should not be considered exhaustive of all measures and controls that can be implemented by management to address all potential loss or injury producing causes. It is intended to provide guidance, rather than prescribe requirements and is not intended as a legal interpretation of any state standard, every county or city therein. This sample program must be maintained current to be effective and may need additional elements to address specific hazards in your work environment. The effectiveness of any loss prevention program should be periodically reassessed against actual loss experience and updated as needed to address new or developing hazards in your work environment.

We strongly encourage that your company customize this sample program by reviewing each section and making appropriate entries or modifications to the program to address your particular business operations and hazard exposures. Most sections of this document can be modified as necessary. Prompts have been included throughout the document where it is advisable to enter your company name and the name(s) of designated responsible personnel. Some forms have protected content and cannot be modified. Forms are designed to be printed for later use.

We hope that you will find this safety program material useful in helping to maintain a safe worker environment.

Forklift Training Program

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Preface for California Employers

California Forklift Training & Safety Procedures

California employers that employ powered industrial truck operators (forklift truck operators) are responsible for ensuring that each operator has been trained and evaluated and found competent to operate the vehicle safely under the training and safety standards established by Cal-OSHA Forklift Safety Law [California Dept. of Industrial Relations General Safety Orders 3649-36690] and the federal OSHA Final Rule for Powered Industrial Truck Operator Training [\[29 CFR 1910.178\(l\)\]](#). These regulations obligate employers to conduct forklift operator training programs, to evaluate and certify the competence of each operator at least once every three (3) years, and to provide refresher training and evaluation in specific circumstances.

Training and Safety Procedures for Forklift Operators

Purpose

This Plan outlines the forklift operator training and safety procedures required by federal OSHA regulations as stated in [29 CFR 1910.178\(l\)](#) and Cal-OSHA Safety Orders 3649-3669. Only employees certified as competent, as demonstrated by the successful completion of the training and evaluation procedures described in this Plan, are permitted to operate powered industrial trucks.

Responsibilities

The Safety and Health Manager is responsible for:

- Overall implementation and supervision of the Company's powered industrial truck operator training program and certification procedure
- Selection and hiring of a person or persons having the knowledge, training and experience to train operators and evaluate their competence
- Posting the Company's Operating Rules for forklift operators.
- Posting in a conspicuous place frequented by operators, copies of the Employee Operating Instructions printed in a language understood by the majority of operators.
- Ensuring that each operator receives a copy of the Company's Employee Operating Instructions at the time of initial assignment and at least annually thereafter.

The training program instructor/trainer is responsible for:

- Providing formal instruction and practical training to trainees
- Evaluating the competence of trainees
- Certifying the competence of each operator employed by the Company
- Performing periodic evaluations of each operator's competence
- Providing refresher training and evaluation as required (refer to section on Refresher Training and Evaluation below)

Supervisors are responsible for:

- Checking the certification of each operator under his/her supervision before assigning a vehicle to an operator
- Assigning vehicles to the operators under his/her supervision

- Enforcing the Company's Operating Rules for forklift operators
- Ensuring that vehicles are in good operating condition at time of assignment
- Sending damaged or malfunctioning vehicles to service department for repair

Forklift operators are responsible for:

- Attending forklift safety training program
- Obtaining certification before operating a forklift
- Reading and becoming familiar with the Company Operating Rules and Employee Operating Instructions
- Operating powered industrial trucks in a safe manner and according to the Company's Operating Rules and Employee Operating Instructions
- Reporting all vehicle problems to his/her supervisor.

Trainer's Qualifications

Training must be provided by persons that have the knowledge, training and experience to train forklift operators and to evaluate their competence.

Program Requirements

The training program shall consist of

1. Formal instruction
2. Practical training
3. Evaluation of the operator's skills
4. Certification of the operator's competence
5. Periodic evaluation at least once every 3 years to ensure continuing competence
6. Refresher training and evaluation, as required in specific circumstances

1. Formal Instruction

Includes lectures, discussion, interactive computer learning, video tape, review of written material on the following topics:

Forklift Truck Training:

- 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

Operating Environment Topics:

- Ground or floor surface conditions where the vehicle will be operated
- Composition of loads to be carried and load stability
- Load manipulation, stacking, and un-stacking
- Pedestrian traffic in areas where the vehicle will be operated
- Narrow aisles and other restricted places where the vehicle will be operated
- Locations classified as hazardous 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 build-up of carbon monoxide or diesel exhaust
- Other unique or potentially hazardous conditions in the workplace that could affect safe operation

2. Practical Training

Trainees may operate a powered industrial truck only under the direct supervision of persons who have the knowledge, training, and experience to train operators and evaluate their competence.

Practical training is conducted under controlled conditions that pose no danger to the trainees or other employees.

Trainees will receive practical training on powered industrial trucks, including (1) demonstrations performed by the trainer, and (2) practical exercises performed by the trainee.

3. Evaluation

The trainer shall evaluate the effectiveness of the training by observation of the trainee's ability to perform the following specific maneuvers:

[List the skills and maneuvers that trainees must perform competently in order to be certified to operate a powered industrial truck.]

4. Certification

The trainer shall certify that each operator has been trained and evaluated. The certification shall state (i) the name of the operator, (ii) the beginning and ending dates of the training program, (iii) the date of the evaluation, and (iv) the identity of the person(s) performing the training and evaluation.

5. Periodic Evaluation

A qualified trainer shall evaluate each operator's skills and ability to safely operate the powered industrial truck **at least once every three years**.

6. Refresher Training and Evaluation

An operator shall undergo refresher training and evaluation of the effectiveness of that training, to ensure that the operator has the knowledge and skills needed to safely operate the powered industrial truck in the following cases:

- The operator has been observed to operate the vehicle in an unsafe manner;
- The operator has been involved in an accident or near-miss incident;
- The operator has received an evaluation that reveals that the operator is not operating the truck safely;
- The operator is assigned to drive a different type of truck;

- A condition in the workplace changes in a manner that could affect safe operation of the truck.

Employer's Operating Rules

The Health and Safety Manager shall post and enforce the following Employer's Operating Rules for the operators of industrial trucks and tow trackers:

- Only authorized and trained personnel are permitted to operate forklift trucks.
- Stunt driving or horseplay is prohibited.
- Do not permit others to ride in the truck.
- Employees shall not ride on the forks of lift trucks.
- Do not place your arms or legs may between the uprights of the mast or outside the running lines of the truck.
- Do not allow anyone to stand or pass under the elevated portion of any truck, whether loaded or empty.
- There must be sufficient headroom under the overhead installations, lights, pipes, sprinkler system, etc.
- An overhead guard must be used as protection against falling objects. An overhead guard is intended to offer protection from the impact of small packages, boxes, bagged materials, etc., representatives of the job application, but not to withstand the impact of a falling capacity load.
- A load backrest extension must be used whenever necessary to minimize the possibility of the load or part of it from falling rearward. Only approved industrial trucks may be used in hazardous locations.
- Do not block fire aisles, access to stairways, or fire equipment.
- Check your vehicle prior to operation each day at the beginning of your shift. Make sure that the tires, horn, lights, battery, controller, brakes, steering mechanism, cooling system and lift system (forks, chains, cable, and limit switches) are working properly.
- If your vehicle is unsafe notify a supervisor immediately and do not use the tractor again until it has been made safe.
- Do not fill fuel tanks when the engine is running. Avoid spilling fuel.

- After fueling, carefully wash away any spilled fuel or oil, or make sure that any spillage has completely evaporated before restarting engine.
- Do not operate any truck with a leak in the fuel system.
- Do not use open flames for checking electrolyte level in storage batteries or checking gasoline level in fuel tanks.
- Do not exceed the authorized or safe speed limit.
- Operate the vehicle at a speed that will permit it to be brought to a stop in a safe manner under all travel conditions.
- Avoid running over loose objects on the roadway surface.
- While negotiating turns, reduce speed to a safe level by turning the hand steering wheel in a smooth, sweeping motion. Except when maneuvering at a very slow speed, the hand steering wheel must be turned at a moderate, even rate.
- All traffic regulations must be strictly observed, including authorized speed limits.
- Slow down for wet and slippery floors.
- Yield the right of way to ambulances, fire trucks, or other vehicles in emergency situations.
- Maintain a safe distance from other vehicles, approximately three truck lengths from the truck ahead, or a 3 second time lapse before passing the same point as the vehicle in front of you.
- Keep the truck under control at all times.
- Do not pass other vehicles traveling in the same direction at intersections, blind spots, or other dangerous locations.
- The driver must slow down and sound the horn at cross aisles and other locations where vision is obstructed. If the load being carried obstructs forward view, the driver must travel with the load trailing behind.
- Drivers must look in the direction of travel and must not move the vehicle until certain that all persons are in the clear.
- Trucks must not be driven up to anyone standing in front of a bench or other fixed object, so that a person could be caught between the truck and the object.
- Grades must be ascended and descended slowly.
- When ascending or descending grades in excess of 10%, loaded trucks must be driven with the load upgrade.

- On all grades, the load and the load engaging means must be tilted back if applicable, and raised only as far as necessary to clear the road surface.
- Motorized hand and hand/rider trucks must be operated on all grades with the load-engaging means downgrade.
- Always carry the forks as low as possible, consistent with safe operations.
- When the driver leaves a vehicle unattended (a vehicle is considered unattended if the driver is more than 25 feet (7.6 meters) away from, or out of sight of the vehicle), the following safety precautions must be observed:
 - (1) the brakes must be set,
 - (2) the mast must be brought to the vertical position,
 - (3) the forks must be left in a down position,
 - (4) the controls must be placed in neutral, and
 - (5) (a) the power must be shut off, and if the vehicle is on an incline, the wheels must be blocked, or (b) the power may remain on if the wheels are blocked, front and rear.
- When the operator is dismounted and standing within 25 feet (7.6 meters) of the vehicle which remains within the operator's view, the controls must be placed in neutral, the brakes must be set to prevent movement, and the load engaging means must be fully lowered.
- **Exception to the preceding rule:** When an operator is dismounted and standing within 25 feet (7.6 meters) of the vehicle which remains within the operator's view, the forks on a fork-equipped vehicle may be raised no more than 42 inches above the level on which the operator/loaders are standing if the power is shut off, the controls are placed in neutral and the brakes are set, and if the vehicle is on an incline, the wheels are blocked.
- Before driving over dockboards and bridgeplates, make sure that they are properly secured.
- Drive over dockboards and bridgeplates carefully and slowly.
- Do not exceed the rated capacity of dockboards and bridgeplates.
- Do not run a truck onto an elevator unless you are specially authorized to do so.
- Before entering an elevator, make sure that the capacity of the elevator will not be exceeded. Approach elevators slowly and enter squarely, after the elevator car is properly leveled. After entering an elevator, place the controls in neutral, shut off power and set the brakes.

- Power hand trucks must enter an elevator or other confined area with the load end forward.
- Vehicles must not be operated on floors, sidewalk doors, or platforms that will not safely support the loaded vehicle.
- Check the flooring of trucks, trailers, and railroad cars for breaks and structural weaknesses before driving onto them.
- Do not drive into and out of highway trucks and trailers until their brakes are set and wheel chocks are placed under the rear wheels to prevent the trucks and trailers from rolling.
- To prevent railroad cars from moving during loading or unloading operations, the car brakes must be set, wheel chocks or other recognized positive stops must be used and blue flags or lights must be displayed in accordance with Public Utilities Commission regulations.
- A minimum distance of one tire's width must be maintained from the edge when truck is situated on any elevated dock, platform, freight car or truck.
- Do not park truck closer than 8 ½ feet from the centerline of railroad tracks.
- Cross railroad tracks diagonally whenever possible.
- Do not handle loads that are heavier than the rated capacity of the truck.
- Do not move a loaded truck until the load is safe and secure. Exercise extreme caution when handling off-center loads that cannot be centered.
- Adjust too long or high loads (including multiple tiered loads) that may affect capacity.
- Use extreme care when tilting the load forward or backward. Tilting forward with the load engaging means (the forklifts) elevated is prohibited, except to pick up a load. An elevated load may not be tilted forward except when depositing load onto a rack or equivalent. When stacking or tiering, use only enough backward tilt to stabilize the load.
- A load engaging device must be placed so that the load will be securely held or supported. Place the forklifts under the load as far as possible. The mast must be carefully tilted backward to stabilize the load.
- When operating a truck equipped with attachments, use extreme caution in securing and handling loads and handling the truck after loads are deposited.
- When not handling a load, trucks equipped with attachments must be operated as partially loaded trucks.
- When trucks are used to open and close doors, the following precautions must be taken:

- (1) A device specifically designed to open and close doors must be attached to the truck;
 - (2) The force applied by the device to the door must be applied parallel to the direction of the travel of the door;
 - (3) The operator must have a full view of the entire door opening or closing operation;
 - (4) The operator and all other persons must be clear of the area where the door might fall while being opened or closed.
- If loads are lifted by 2 or more trucks working together to lift a single load, the total weight of the load being lifted must not exceed the combined rated lifting capacity of all trucks involved in the lifting operation.

Employee Operating Instructions

The Health & Safety Manager shall:

- (1) Post in a conspicuous place frequented by operators, copies of the following Employee Operating Instructions printed in a language understood by the majority of operators; and
- (2) Provide each operator with a copy of the following Employee Operating Instructions at the time of initial assignment and at least annually thereafter.
 - Securely fasten your seat belt if the forklift truck or agricultural tractor has a ROPS.
 - Avoid operating the vehicle near ditches, embankments, and holes, if possible.
 - Slow down when turning, crossing slopes, and on rough, slick, or muddy surfaces.
 - Stay off slopes that are too steep for safe operation.
 - Watch where you are going, especially at row ends, on roads, and around trees.
 - No riders are permitted.
 - Operate the vehicle smoothly; no jerky turns, starts, or stops.
 - Stunt driving or horseplay is strictly forbidden.
 - Hitch only to the drawbar and hitch points recommended by tractor manufacturers.
 - When truck is stopped, set brakes securely and use park lock if available.
 - Check your vehicle prior to operation each day at the beginning of your shift. Make sure that the tires, horn, lights, battery, controller, brakes, steering mechanism,

cooling system and lift system (forks, chains, cable, and limit switches) are working properly.

- If your vehicle is not operating properly, notify a supervisor immediately and do not use the vehicle again until it has been repaired and is safe to operate.
- Do not try to repair your truck. Only authorized mechanics are permitted to repair your truck.
- Stay clear of any vehicle that is not operating properly or safely. You may be seriously injured if an unsafe vehicle makes sudden or unexpected movements.

Appendix A

FORKLIFT DAILY SHIFT CHECKLIST

Forklift Manufacturer _____

Date _____

Forklift Identifying Number _____

Inspected by _____

Industrial trucks shall be examined at least daily before being placed in service for that day. If the truck is used daily on more than one shift, it shall be inspected after each shift.

ITEMS TO BE CHECKED

OK REPAIR

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | Tires |
| _____ | _____ | Horn functions? |
| _____ | _____ | Lights functioning? |
| _____ | _____ | Battery |
| _____ | _____ | Controller |
| _____ | _____ | Lift system includes load limit switches, load engagement means, chains, cables, forks |
| _____ | _____ | Brakes (normal and emergency) |
| _____ | _____ | Steering mechanism, any free play in steering? |
| _____ | _____ | Leaks in hydraulic system. Check hydraulic fuel level. |
| _____ | _____ | Leaks in fuel system; smell for leaks in propane system. |
| _____ | _____ | Truck clean, free of lint, excess oil and grease? |
| _____ | _____ | Overhead guards broken or damaged? |
| _____ | _____ | Gauges work properly? |
| _____ | _____ | Seat belt in good condition and works properly? |
| _____ | _____ | Are all clamps for propane tank functional and locked down? (If propane equipped) |
| _____ | _____ | Engine oil ok? |
| _____ | _____ | Transmission fluid ok? |
| _____ | _____ | Windshield wipers in good condition, if equipped? |
| _____ | _____ | Label or identifying mark indicating approval by a testing laboratory present? |
| _____ | _____ | All name plates and markings are in place and maintained in legible condition? |
| _____ | _____ | Does truck emit hazardous sparks or flames from the exhaust system? |

List any other problems found with the truck.

Note: Any items found to be defective will require immediate notification of your supervisor and the lift will be taken out of service until repaired.