

Around the Provinces: Powered Mobile Equipment Signaler Requirements Across Canada



Incidents involving forklifts and other powered mobile equipment are a leading cause of workplace injuries. And while all jurisdictions require employers to deploy signallers to direct PME operators, the rules vary significantly from place to place. Here's a summary of the PME signaller rules in each part of Canada

OHS Requirements for Use of Signallers to Direct Powered Mobile Equipment (PME) Operators

FEDERAL	
Signaller Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">*When PME operator has obstructed view*When rear-dumping PME used to discharge loads at edge of sudden drop in grade level (unless bumping block is used to keep the PME from tipping)*At approaches to areas in which materials handling operations take place (unless warning signs are posted)

Signaller Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Not perform other duties while signalling operator *Ensure nearby workers are safe or warned before signalling operator to move
Other Requirements	<p><u>Employer must:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Establish uniform code of signals for use at all its workplaces *Provide radio, phone or other audible signalling device if visual signals can't be clearly seen <p><u>Operator must</u> obey signals + treat any signal they don't understand as STOP</p>
ALBERTA	
Signaller Required	When PME operator has obstructed view (unless PME has audible warning device or automatic stopping system)
Signaller Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Wear a highly visible vest, armlet or other clothing clearly identifying worker as designated signaller when giving hand signals *Ensure he/she has unobstructed view *Ensure there are no hazards in vicinity before signalling operator to move

<p>Other Requirements</p>	<p><u>Employer must:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Designate competent worker as signaller *Provide the required highly visible vest, armlet or other clothing clearly identifying worker as designated signaller *Ensure only one designated signaller gives signals to PME operator at a time + that alternative workers are available *Provide communication equipment in case visual signalling won't be effective <p><u>Operator must:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Obey all designated signaller's signals *Obey all STOP signals even if person who gives them isn't a designated signaller
<p>BRITISH COLUMBIA</p>	
<p>Signaller Required</p>	<p>When PME operator has obstructed view (unless directed by a traffic control or warning system)</p>
<p>Signaller Duties</p>	<p>Be stationed in safe position in continuous view of operator + with unobstructed view of area into which PME will move</p>
<p>Other Requirements</p>	
<p>MANITOBA</p>	

Signaller Required	<p>*At a construction site where PME moves in reverse or in a way that may endanger the operator or another worker in the vicinity</p> <p>*At any workplace where work is done: (i) within 3 metres of an overhead electrical line; or (ii) using equipment or machinery from a location from which it, or any of its parts, may come within 3 m of an overhead electrical line</p>
Signaller Duties	<p>*Have a clear view of operator + intended path of travel</p> <p>*Direct operator using: (i) pre-arranged visual signals; or (ii) a radio communication system, if visual signals won't be clearly visible to the operator</p>
Other Requirements	<p><u>Employer must:</u></p> <p>*Designate competent worker to serve as signal person</p> <p>*Provide the required radio communication system, if visual signals won't be clearly visible to the operator</p>
NEW BRUNSWICK	
Signaller Required	When PME operators are backing up + can't clearly see where they're going
Signaller Duties	
Other Requirements	Operator may not back up equipment until getting the go-ahead from the signaller
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR	

Signaller Required	When PME operator has obstructed view (unless directed by a traffic control or warning system)
Signaller Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Be stationed in a safe spot in continuous view of operator *Have an unobstructed view of area into which the PME will travel *Not be "otherwise occupied" while the PME is in motion
Other Requirements	
NOVA SCOTIA	
Signaller Required	<p><u>When PME operator:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Doesn't have an adequate view of the load; or *Doesn't have a clear view of the route; or *Can't see clearly around the equipment when it's moving + hasn't ensured nobody is endangered as a result; or *Causes the equipment to move under its own power from one location to another + the situation creates a hazard
Signaller Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Be readily identifiable to the operator *Use a well understood distinctive code of hand signals or another effective communication system *Get help from another signaller if both his/her own + the operator's view of the load or route is obstructed or partly obstructed

Other Requirements	Operator may not move a load except at the signaller's signal
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES/NUNAVUT	
Signaller Required	When PME operator has obstructed view of the route
Signaller Duties	Have a clear view of the PME's path of travel
Other Requirements	Operator may not proceed until a worker gives the signal that it's safe
ONTARIO (Const. Projects)	
Signaller Required	When: (i) PME operator has obstructed view of the route; or (ii) the equipment or its load may endanger another person
Signaller Duties	<p>*Jointly establish visible signals with operator</p> <p>*Communicate via telecommunication if visual signals aren't clearly visible to operator</p> <p>*Not do other work while acting as signaller</p> <p>*Wear appropriate high-visibility safety apparel⁽¹⁾</p> <p>*Be clear of + have a clear view of intended path of travel of PME or its load</p> <p>*Be in full view of operator</p>

Other Requirements	<p><u>Employer must:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Appoint a competent worker to serve as signaller *Furnish required telecommunication system + high-visibility safety apparel *Ensure signaller gets adequate oral training *Ensure signaller gets adequate oral + written instructions + keep copy of the instructions at site <p><u>Operator must</u> jointly establish visible signals with signaller + obey the signals</p>	
ONTARIO (Ind. Ests.)		
Signaller Required	When operator doesn't have full view of intended path of travel of PME or its load	
Signaller Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Be clear of + have a clear view of intended path of travel of PME or its load *Be in full view of operator 	
Other Requirements	Employer must appoint a competent worker to serve as signaller	PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
Signaller Required	When PME operator's vision is obstructed	
Signaller Duties	Mutually agree with operator on signals	
Other Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *<u>Employer must</u> designate employee to give signals *<u>Operator must</u> mutually agree with designated employee on signals + obey the signals 	

QUÉBEC	
Signaller Required	When a self-propelled vehicle moving in reverse at a construction site would endanger the operator or a worker
Signaller Duties	<p>*Use bidirectional means of telecommunications to guide operator. <u>Exception:</u> Hand signals OK if vehicle backs up < 10 metres <u>Signallers designated site signal persons must also:</u></p> <p>*Receive specialized training⁽²⁾ *Wear fluorescent yellow-green high-visibility safety apparel of Class 2 or 3 + Level 2 that meets CSA Z96 *Use a communication method taught to them during training *Remain visible to operators + clear of the vehicle's trajectory</p>
Other Requirements	<p><u>Principal contractor of construction site must:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Appoint signal person *Furnish the necessary telecommunications equipment for vehicle backup maneuvers <p>*If the signal person serves as site signal person: i. Establish the required traffic plan for the site; ii. Furnish the required signal person training; + iii. Furnish the required high-visibility safety apparel</p>
SASKATCHEWAN	
Signaller Required	When PME operator has obstructed view of the route

Signaller Duties	Have a clear view of the PME's path of travel
Other Requirements	Operator may not proceed until a worker gives the signal that it's safe
YUKON	
Signaller Required	When PME operator can't see immediately behind the machine, either directly or by use of mirrors or other device + it's not practicable for machine to have an automatic audible warning device
Signaller Duties	Be stationed in a safe position in continuous view of operator + an unobstructed view of area into which PME will move
Other Requirements	Operator may not proceed until a signaller is in place + gives the signal

Notes:

(1) In Ontario, the signaller must wear an appropriate garment covering the upper body: i. of fluorescent blaze or international orange; and which has ii. two 5 cm-wide retroreflective + fluorescent yellow stripes with area of at least 500 cm sq on front + 570 cm sq on back; iii. front stripes centered + arranged vertically roughly 225 mm apart + in an "X" pattern in back; iv. an adjustable fit if it's a vest; and v. a side + front tear-away feature if it's a nylon vest; in addition, signallers who may be endangered during night-time hours must also wear retro-reflective silver stripes encircling each arm + leg, or equivalent side visibility-enhancing stripes with a minimum area of 50 cm sq per side

(2) In Qu bec, persons designated to act as site signal persons must receive training, provided by an instructor, that covers: i. the risks created by the movement of persons + self-propelled vehicles at the site; ii. the traffic rules + safety instructions in place at the site, including those provided for in the traffic plan, marking of traffic zones + instructions necessary to perform their task; iii. the required equipment such as high-visibility safety apparel + bidirectional means of telecommunications; iv. the signal person's role and responsibilities; v. the positioning of site signal persons + blind spots of self-propelled vehicles; + vi. the means of communication + code of hand signals related to backup maneuvers.