

# Fake Forklift Inspection Records Cost British Employer



Failing to take reasonable steps to protect workers, such as by inspecting and properly maintaining equipment, endangers their safety and could result in a OHS violation. And falsifying records to show that you *did* take appropriate steps will only make matters worse.

Look what happened to a North London company in Great Britain.

During a routine health and safety inspection, an inspector from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the UK's safety authority, asked to see the vehicle examination records (what we'd call inspection records in Canada) for the company's 2.5-tonne forklift truck.

The company later emailed the document to the inspector but it appeared 'and was later proven to be a fraud.

HSE found that the forklift had *never* been examined, as required by safety rules for lifting equipment, since being purchased nearly two years before the inspection. A specialist mechanical inspector from HSE who examined the forklift found more than 40 faults, including some that could have endangered its operator.

HSE issued the company a notice, barring it from any use of the forklift until it was safe to do so.

The company admitted three safety violations, including

operating a fault-ridden forklift truck and trying to deceive safety inspectors by forging a positive examination report on the vehicle, and was fined £18,000 (\$32,485 CAD).

After the sentencing hearing, HSE Inspector Tahir Mortuza noted that the company was required by law to make sure its forklift truck was maintained regularly and properly examined to allow the identification of safety-critical defects. 'It failed to do this and the vehicle was allowed to deteriorate to the point of being riddled with faults.'

The inspector added that the company's 'blatant attempt to deceive HSE by forging documentation' demonstrates that it was 'willing to expose its employees to the risk of serious injury or even death' [*MIB United Meat Ltd.*, HSE news release, Sept. 4, 2014].

To ensure that your forklifts are safe for workers to operate, inspect them regularly using a checklist such as this one. Make sure the checklist is filled out honestly and any defects or safety issues found are corrected or addressed before workers use the equipment.