

# Forklift-Mounted Work Platforms – Know the Laws of Your Province



**Employers must follow strict safety rules when letting workers work from a platform elevated by a forklift.**

Sometimes the easiest way to elevate workers to the height where they must perform a task is to have them stand on a platform raised by a forklift. This is permissible, provided that the employer and workers involved follow specific safety requirements set out in OHS regulations. Among other things, the employer must ensure that the equipment is designed for such use and capable of supporting the expected weight, elevated workers have appropriate fall protection and an operator remains at the forklift controls at all times while the platform is lifted. However, requirements may also vary by jurisdiction. BC and Manitoba have the strictest rules while New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia have the least stringent requirements. Here's a summary of the requirements in each part of Canada.

## OHS Forklift Mounted Work Platform Requirements

### FEDERAL

(1) Motorized or manual materials handling equipment shall not be used for hoisting or positioning an employee, unless the equipment is equipped with a platform, bucket or basket designed for those purposes; and (2) Employer must ensure that person working on an aerial device, boom-type elevating platform, scissor lift platform, forklift truck platform or any similar personnel lifting equipment in circumstances where fall protection is required uses a fall-restraint system connected to: (a) an anchorage specified in the instructions of the manufacturer of the lifting equipment; or (b) if no anchorage is specified by the manufacturer, an anchorage certified by a person authorized to exercise the profession of engineering in Canada and that meets CSA Z259.16, Design of active fall-protection systems (*COHS Regs.*, Secs. 14.30 and Sec. 12.09(8))

## ALBERTA

(1) Employer must ensure that workers don't and workers and others must not travel in a basket, bucket, platform or other elevated or aerial device moving on a road or work site if road conditions, traffic, overhead wires, cables or other obstructions create a danger; (2) Employer must ensure that a cage or work platform mounted on the forks of powered mobile equipment and intended to only support material is designed and constructed so that it's securely attached to the lifting carriage or forks, so that the cage or platform can't accidentally move laterally or vertically and so that the powered mobile equipment can't tip; (3) Employer must ensure that a work platform mounted on the forks of powered mobile equipment and intended to support a worker: (a) is commercially manufactured or, if not commercially manufactured, is designed and certified by a professional engineer, (b) has guardrails and toe boards, and (c) has a screen or similar barrier that prevents a worker from touching any drive mechanism; (4) Employer must ensure that the operator of the powered mobile equipment remains at the controls while a worker is on the elevated fork mounted work platform; and (5) A person must not be on a fork mounted work platform while the powered mobile equipment to which the platform is attached is moving horizontally (*OHS Code*, Sec. 349)

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

(1) OHS Regs. define "work platform" as a movable work platform supported by a lift truck; (2) A work platform may be used to support workers only if other conventional means of access, such as ladders, scaffolds and elevating work platforms, aren't practicable; (3) Employer must ensure that a work platform intended for use by workers was designed, and is used by workers, in accordance with: (a) ANSI/ITSDF B56.1-2009, Safety Standard for Low Lift and High Lift Trucks, if the platform is being used with a high lift truck, or (b) ANSI/ITSDF B56.6-2011, Safety Standard for Rough Terrain Forklift Trucks, if the platform is being used with a rough terrain forklift truck; (4) Employer must ensure that a work platform intended for use by workers is legibly marked in a conspicuous place to show (a) the name of (i) the platform's manufacturer, or (ii) the professional engineer who certified the platform as having been built to meet the applicable standard referred to in subsection (3), (b) if the platform was built by a manufacturer, (i) the model number and serial number, or (ii) other unique marking or identification that links the platform with the manufacturer's documentation respecting the platform's design and use, (c) if the platform was custom built, the unique identification number or code that links the platform with the professional engineer's documentation for the platform's design and use, (d) the title of the safety standards the platform was designed to meet, (e) the weight of the platform when empty, (f) the rated load of the platform, and (g) the minimum width and minimum rated capacity a lift truck must have to support the platform in a manner that complies with the applicable ANSI standard when the platform is loaded to its rated load; (5) The width of a lift truck referred to in subsection (4) (g) must be measured in a straight line from any point on the outer part of the right load bearing tire to the corresponding point on the outer part of the left load bearing tire; (6) Employer must ensure that a qualified person inspects both the work platform and the lift truck supporting the work platform (a) each time the platform is mounted on the lift truck, and (b) at the start of each work shift, if the platform is already mounted on the lift truck at the start of the work shift, to ensure the platform

is properly secured to the lift truck and the lift truck and the platform are safe for use; (7) Employer must ensure that the inspections referred to in subsection (6) take place before either the work platform or the lift truck is used by a worker; (8) Only a worker who's qualified and authorized by the employer may operate a work platform and lift truck supporting the work platform, for the purpose of supporting workers on the platform; (9) A worker must not operate either a work platform or the lift truck supporting the work platform unless (a) there's effective two-way voice communication between the lift truck operator and a worker on the platform designated by the employer to provide the lift truck operator with directions for platform movement, and (b) the lift truck operator and the designated worker on the platform prearrange hand and arm signals, if the voice communication referred to in paragraph (a) relies on the use of a radio or other electronic system, to allow the designated worker to signal the lift truck operator to bring the platform to the ground or floor level in the event the radio or other electronic system fails; (10) Lift truck operator must remain at the controls of the lift truck at all times there are any workers on the platform supported by the lift truck; (11) Before a work platform may be used to support workers, the lift truck operator must conduct a trial lift of the platform, with no workers on the platform, to assess the suitability of the surface bearing the weight of the lift truck and whether the platform is clear of all obstructions, unless (a) the lift truck is on a type of surface the employer has identified as capable of safely supporting the lift truck and the platform when the platform is loaded to its rated load, and (b) the space in and around which the platform is to be raised is clear of all obstructions (*OHS Reg.*, Sec. 13.30)

## **MANITOBA**

(1) Employer must ensure that an elevated work platform mounted on a forklift (a) is commercially manufactured or constructed in accordance with the specifications certified by a professional engineer; (b) is designed by the manufacturer of the forklift or a professional engineer to safely support the expected load; (c) is equipped with guardrails and toe-boards that meet the OHS fall protection requirements; (d) is equipped with a screen or similar barrier along the edge of the platform adjacent to the mast of the forklift to prevent a worker from coming into contact with the mast drive mechanism; (e) has a skid-resistant deck; (f) has the following legibly and permanently marked in a conspicuous place on it: (i) the maximum number of workers who may occupy the platform, (ii) the weight of the platform and its rated load, (iii) the forklift type for which it's been designed, (iv) any other information necessary for its safe operation; and (g) is securely attached to the forks and carriage of the forklift; (2) When a worker is on a work platform mounted on a forklift, employer must ensure that (a) the forklift is on a stable, level surface, unless it's a rough terrain forklift; and (b) the operator of the forklift remains at its controls when the platform and the forklift are in the elevated position; and (3) Employer must ensure that (a) a worker on a work platform mounted on a forklift uses a fall arrest system that meets OHS requirements; and (b) the fall arrest system is attached at an anchor point specified by the professional engineer who designed the work platform (*WSH Regs.*, Secs. 28.45 to 28.47)

## **NEW BRUNSWICK**

(1) Employer must ensure that a forklift platform (a) is securely attached to

the lift truck so as to prevent accidental movement of the platform or the tipping of the forklift, (b) is designed and constructed of material of sufficient strength to support safely the loads to which it may be subjected, and (c) if a manufactured platform, is erected, used, maintained and dismantled in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications, and (d) equipped with guardrails; (2) Employer must ensure that an industrial lift truck supporting a forklift platform is operated by a competent person on a firm flat surface to ensure the truck's stability; (3) If it's not practical to install guardrails when an employee is required to work from a moving forklift platform, employer must provide and employee must use a travel restraint system or fall-arresting system attached to an anchor point provided by the manufacturer or approved by an engineer; (4) When a fall-arresting system is used, employer must ensure the system doesn't interfere with the raising and lowering of the platform; (5) A person who operates an industrial lift truck with a forklift platform must, if the platform is elevated more than 1.2 m and there is a person on the platform, (a) not move the truck, and (b) remain at the controls of the truck; and (6) An employee must not work on a forklift platform unless (a) the industrial lift truck is on a firm flat surface, and (b) the platform is equipped with guardrails or a travel restraint system or fall-arresting system (*OHS Gen. Reg.*, Sec. 129)

## **NEWFOUNDLAND**

(1) A work platform mounted on the forks of a lift truck must be designed by an engineer or meet a standard acceptable to the minister and (a) securely attached to the lifting carriage or forks; (b) provided with perimeter guardrails meeting the requirements of sections 28 and 30 of the OHS Regs.; (c) equipped with guarding to prevent occupants from contacting a hazardous part of the lifting machinery; and (d) clearly marked with the rated load of the platform; and (2) Where a worker is elevated on a work platform supported by a lift truck, (a) the lift truck operator must remain at the controls of the lift truck; (b) the lift truck must be kept vertical; (c) the lift truck must not be moved except for minor adjustments necessary to facilitate positioning of the platform; and (d) a platform occupant must use a personal fall protection system as required by Part X of the OHS Regs. (*OHS Regs.*, Secs. 216 and 217)

## **NOVA SCOTIA**

(1) Employer must ensure that a lift truck work-platform is designed, maintained, inspected and operated in accordance with the latest version of ANSI standard ANSI/ITSDF B56.1, 'Safety Standard for Low Lift and High Lift Trucks'; and (2) When a person is on a lift truck work-platform, the lift truck used to lift a person must be operated only under the following conditions: (a) it must be operated by a competent person who must be continuously at the controls; (b) it must not be moved laterally over large distances; (c) it or the platform may be moved slowly to make minor adjustments only (*WHS Regs.*, Sec. 23.12)

## **ONTARIO**

A crane, lift truck or similar equipment may be used to support, raise or lower a worker only when, (a) the worker is on a platform, (i) equipped with adequate safety devices that will automatically prevent the platform and load from falling if the platform's normal support fails, (ii) suspended from a boom that

does not move, and the person is attached to a separate lifeline suspended from the boom or a fixed support capable of supporting at least four times the weight of the worker, or (iii) attached to a mast or boom which, (A) is hydraulically or pneumatically operated, and (B) is equipped with a safety device that will prevent free fall of the platform in the event of a pressure line failure; (b) where the equipment isn't designed for the specific purpose of hoisting personnel, the load applied to the crane, lift truck or similar equipment is less than one half the maximum rated load; (c) the platform has a sign indicating the load that may be applied to the crane, lift truck or similar equipment under clause (b); (d) where controls are provided at more than one location, (i) each control station is provided with means whereby the operator can shut off power to the equipment, and (ii) interlocks have been provided so that only one station can be operative at any time; and (e) except when the controls are operated from the platform, the controls are attended and operated by another worker (*OHS Ind. Ests. Reg.*, Sec. 52)

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

(1) Employer must ensure that an industrial lift truck is not used to lift a fork-lift platform where (a) the ground or other conditions at a workplace may affect the lift truck's stability; or (b) the lift truck is susceptible to tipping, displacement or other destabilization; (2) Employer must ensure that a fork-lift platform is (a) erected, used, maintained and dismantled in accordance with (i) the manufacturer's specifications, or (ii) a professional engineer's design that includes instructions on erection, use, maintenance and dismantlement; (b) equipped with guardrails; (c) securely attached to an industrial lift truck during use; (d) operated at all times by a competent person, who must be continuously at the controls where the platform is in an elevated position; and (e) used only where a firm, flat surface ensures the stability of the industrial lift truck, unless otherwise specified by the manufacturer; (3) While a worker is working on a fork-lift platform, worker's employer must ensure that the worker is wearing a fall arrest system attached to an anchor point on the platform; (4) Employer must ensure that an industrial lift truck complies with CSA Standard B335-15 Safety standard for lift trucks; and (5) Where (a) a fork-lift platform is in an elevated position; and (b) a worker is on the platform, the worker's employer must ensure the industrial lift truck supporting the work platform isn't moved horizontally (*Scaffolding Regs.*, Sec. 17)

## QUÉBEC

Hoisting a worker with a lift truck is allowed, provided that: (a) the lift truck meets CSA Standard B335.1-1977 Low Lift and High Lift Trucks; (b) the platform encircles the forks and is secured to the apron of the lift truck; (c) the total load doesn't exceed 50% of the rated load of the lift truck; (d) when the platform is equipped with a hoisting control, it must be possible to stop the lift truck from this control and the latter must have priority on any other control; and (e) when the platform isn't equipped with a hoisting control, the operator of the lift truck must remain at the controls during the work (*Safety Code for Const. Industry*, Sec. 3.10.7.)

## **SASKATCHEWAN**

(1) Employer or contractor must ensure that while a worker is on a work platform mounted on a forklift and the forklift is in the raised position, the operator: (a) remains at the controls; and (b) doesn't drive the forklift; (2) Employer or contractor must ensure that no worker is raised or lowered by, or required or permitted to work on, a forklift or any device mounted on a forklift except as provided by Section 12-27 of the OHS Regs.; (3) Employer or contractor must ensure that a work platform mounted on a forklift on which a worker may be raised or lowered or required or permitted to work is: (a) designed and constructed to an approved standard or designed and constructed and certified safe for use by a professional engineer to support safely the maximum load that the platform is expected to support; (b) securely attached to the forks of the forklift to prevent accidental lateral or vertical movement of the platform; (c) equipped with guardrails and toeboards that meet the requirements of sections 9-11 and 9-12 of the OHS Regs.; and (d) equipped with a screen or similar barrier along the edge of the platform adjacent to the mast of the forklift to prevent a worker from contacting the mast drive mechanism; (4) Employer or contractor must ensure that a worker working from a work platform mentioned in subsection (3) uses a personal fall arrest system that meets the requirements of Part 7 of the OHS Regs.; and (5) Employer or contractor must ensure that each unit of powered mobile equipment is constructed, structurally repaired, inspected, tested, maintained and operated in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications or an approved standard (*OHS Regs.*, Sec. 12-25(6) and 12-27)

## **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES & NUNAVUT**

(1) While a worker is on a work platform mounted on a forklift that's in a raised position, employer must ensure that the operator (a) remains at the controls; and (b) doesn't drive the forklift; (2) Employer must ensure that a work platform mounted on a forklift on which a worker could be raised or lowered or required or permitted to work is (a) designed and constructed to an approved standard or designed and constructed and certified by a professional engineer; (b) securely attached to the forks of the forklift to prevent accidental lateral or vertical movement of the platform; (c) equipped with guardrails and toeboards that meet the requirements of sections 128 and 129 of the OHS Regs.; and (d) equipped with a screen or similar barrier along the edge of the platform adjacent to the mast of the forklift to prevent a worker from contacting the mast drive mechanism; and (3) Employer must ensure that a worker working from a work platform referred to in subsection (2) uses a personal fall arrest system that meets the requirements of Part 7 of the Regs. (*OHS Regs.*, Secs. 198(6) and 200)

## **YUKON**

(1) A work platform mounted on a forklift must be designed and constructed to a safety factor of 4, based on the heaviest anticipated loading; (2) The platform must be attached to the forks of the lift truck to prevent lateral or vertical movement of platform; (3) Guardrails and toe boards must be installed on all open sides of the forklift platform; and (4) A screen, mesh or similar barrier must be provided on the mast side of the forklift platform to prevent workers from contacting the mast-hoisting apparatus (*WSCA Regs.*, Sec. 10.54)