

Spot The Safety Violation: 10 Forklift Safety Tips



What could've and should've been done to keep this forklift from overturning?



Powered mobile equipment, such as forklifts, are commonly used to lift and move materials around the workplace. Although using forklifts can protect workers from injuries they could develop if they move materials by hand, such as strained backs, improper use of this equipment can expose workers to other kinds of injuries.

For example, as this photo shows, trying to move too big or heavy of a load can cause a forklift to overturn and possibly crush its operator or injure other workers in the area. Instead of trying to move the load with a forklift, perhaps the company should've used a crane or hoist instead.

10 FORKLIFT SAFETY TIPS

Ensure that workers who operate forklifts in your workplace follow these 10 safety tips:

1. Make sure the load doesn't exceed the forklift's load capacity.
2. Carry the load as far back as possible to minimize the possibility of tipping. And always tilt the load toward the truck.
3. The load on a forklift should be stable, secured and evenly distributed before you try to move it.
4. Don't operate a forklift with an obstructed view. You must be able to see where you're going.
5. On slopes, always keep the load uphill—that is, back down the slope and go forward when moving up the slope.
6. Never raise or lower a load while the forklift is in motion.
7. Carry the load as low to the ground as possible while still clearing any obstructions.
8. Observe all speed limits and traffic signs, stopping at all intersections. Also, avoid making quick turns and sudden stops.
9. Always look in the direction in which you're moving and don't rely on mirrors.
10. Make sure that the area behind you is clear before backing up and turning.

Also, to ensure that your workers know how to safely operate forklifts, give them a toolbox talk on this equipment and a forklift operator performance test.

You should also require workers to inspect forklifts before using the equipment. (Adapt this inspection checklist for their use.)

To protect workers if a forklift or similar equipment rolls or tips over, install appropriate rollover protective structures. Also, ensure forklifts have seatbelts and require workers to use them.