



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



Forklift Fatalities and Injuries Safety Message

Forklifts, or powered industrial trucks as they are referred to by OSHA, are a common piece of equipment found in many different industries. These pieces of equipment are primarily used to move materials and come in a variety of makes and models.

The two common design types are ones that an individual rides on to operate and the other is a design that is controlled by a walking operator. While the overall design, make, and model will affect what the specific hazards are, this equipment is extremely dangerous when not operated correctly.

OSHA Forklift Fatality Statistics

According to OSHA statistics, forklifts are responsible for around 85 fatalities in U.S. workplaces annually. According to these statistics, the most common cause for fatalities while operating forklifts are tip-over incidents resulting in the operator being crushed (42%). OSHA also stated that forklifts are responsible for over 34,000 serious injuries as well each year.

Best Practices to Avoid Forklift-related Fatalities and Injuries

- * Only trained and licensed individuals should operate forklifts.
- * Always wear your seatbelt while operating forklifts.
- * Avoid leading edges such as unprotected loading docks.
- * Never attempt to jump from a forklift that is tipping over. Hold onto the steering wheel and keep body parts inside the cab.
- * Operate at safe speeds and adjust speed for site conditions and work task being performed.
- * Use caution on steep grades.
- * Never overload the forklift.
- * Travel with the forks close to the ground.
- * Never carry or lift passengers with a forklift unless it is designed to do so.
- * Eliminate forklift operation in heavy foot traffic areas.

Discussion point:

What are some other major hazards we face here that can result in forklift-related injuries?