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AUDITING OURSELVES

When the word audit is mentioned, people generally think of a negative experience, an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax audit or of a confrontation. However, it is possible for audits to be positive.

First, let's consider the definition of audit.

Audit: A systematic or methodical review; to examine with intent to verify.

Audits can apply to your job. From a safety standpoint there is only one way to do a job – the safe way. Safety needs to be the first consideration in everything we do. It is possible that we may not always be doing this, so our continuing efforts to review or think

Contrary to an IRS audit which evaluates what we did not record, our job audit should evaluate what we did record. If we take the time to at least mentally think out the steps that we go through to perform a task, we can audit it to ensure we are safe.

Auditing ourselves

Look at these things prior to completing a task:

- ⇒ PPE, do we have the correct eye protection? The correct gloves? Protective footwear?
- ⇒ Do we need any special PPE such as a chemical apron or a harness?
- ⇒ Is our PPE in good condition?
- ⇒ Do we have the correct tools and are they in good shape?
- ⇒ Do we know how to operate the tools or equipment?
- ⇒ Do we know how to accomplish the task safely?
- ⇒ Do we know the harmful energy sources around the area and have we isolated them?

These are a just a few of the questions we should ask. However, they include some of the most important ones. Ensure you do a quick audit, prior to accomplishing a task. A more thorough one should be done if we're doing something for the first time or for the first time in a long time. _____

Forklift Safety Rules

Forklifts are excellent labor-saving devices. They save time and reduce the likelihood of injury associated with manual material handling activities. However, forklifts can become very dangerous if operated by a reckless or untrained operator. All operators should receive safety training prior to being allowed to operate a forklift. Forklift accidents tend to be very serious, involving both personal injury and damage to property. These accidents can be avoided if operators use some common sense and follow safe operating procedures. Do not operate a forklift until you have been properly trained and authorized to do so.

Basic Forklift Safety Practices

Here are a few common safety rules to follow during forklift operation:

1. Use the seat belt. It will keep you secured in the seat in the unplanned event of a tip over.
 2. A parked forklift should have the forks flat on the floor with the controls set to neutral and with the parking brake set.
 3. A forklift is considered to be "unattended" if the operator is more than 25 feet away or if the forklift is out of the direct vision of the operator. Unattended forklifts should be parked with the power turned off.
- When operating the forklift on inclines, the load should always be on the uphill side of the incline. Drive forward going up the incline. Drive backward going down the incline.

1. When traveling without a load on the forks, keep the forks approximately four to six inches off the floor.
 2. Never allow anyone to walk underneath a raised load.
 3. Stop at all blind corners to check for other traffic in the area. This includes other forklifts and pedestrians. Honk your horn and look before you proceed.
 4. If carrying a tall load that blocks your forward vision, drive in reverse and turn your head so you can see where you are going.
 5. If operating around other forklifts maintain a three-forklift length distance between forklifts and never attempt passing.
- Never drive a forklift up to the back of a person who is unaware that the forklift is behind them. _____

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There are over 2,000 public power communities across the nation. One out of seven Americans are served by a public power community. Public power utilities are public service institutions whose primary focus is to serve their customers. Their common purpose is to provide reliable and safe not-for-profit electricity at a reasonable price while protecting the environment. The hallmark of public power is local control where citizens have a direct and powerful voice in utility decisions and policies.



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Public power is more to communities than just an essential utility. It is a source of unique and fulfilling career opportunities in your local community. Employees make a difference by serving their own neighborhoods and families. Talented high school, college and technical college graduates—and even technology, environmental and public service professionals—will find that competitive salaries aren't the only thing attractive about careers in public power.



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