

Forklift accident

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Forklift Accidents Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was created “ to assure safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance.”(osha. gov) OSHA has put in place new training guidelines and inspections in order to reduce the incredible number of accidents related to forklifts and similar powered industrial trucks. Its estimates show that 85 fatal accidents are caused by forklifts every year and 11% of all forklifts are involved in some kind of accident every year in the US.

An accident occurred at the construction site of a light industrial building. A worker was driving a 3 ton forklift down a circular vehicle ramp from the fourth level towards the third level. There was no load on the forklift. The vehicle suddenly swerved and overturned on the third level and the worker who was driving the forklift was crushed beneath the vehicle and died on the spot. The driver had not undergone the mandatory forklift driver’s training course. Findings revealed that the forklift involved in the accident belonged to the main contractor and was poorly maintained. The driver was an employee of the plastering and bricklaying works contractor. The numbers of trained forklift operators were inadequate with respect to the number of forklifts. Also there was no risk assessment conducted on forklift operations. Another such accident occurred at a warehouse in a distribution park. A worker tallying stock stored on metal racks squeezed himself into the gap between two racks. A forklift driver was pushing racks closer together to make space for more racks. He did not see the employee, and the employee was crushed to death between the metal racks. If risk assessment had been

carried out, forklifts and other workers would not have been allowed to operate in the area concurrently. It also seemed that there was inadequate safety training awareness among the employees.

The key to preventing such accidents is training and enforcement of safety measures at places where forklifts are used. Awareness among employees and employers about the hazards of small oversights can reduce the number of accidents drastically. Workers training needs to be specifically designed to the kind of vehicle they use, and this training should be upgraded and re-evaluated every few years. Through its outreach program OSHA offers occupational safety and health classes geared to the requirements of both employees and employers.

The driver being crushed under the weight of a toppled forklift is one of the largest forms of fatalities in forklift accidents. Clearly this is one aspect of safety management that needs to be thoroughly thought out and measures put in place to reduce such incidents. Training and inspection of vehicles to ensure that safety procedures are in place is essential and equally so is the compliance of both the employers and employees with such safety procedures.

Risk assessment is important for even simple forklift procedures. A system to ensure that forklifts are operated by trained authorized personnel is absolutely essential to the safety of the workers as well as the contractors. Measures to effectively manage the movement of both forklifts and other workers within the work area, is essential to prevent accidental injury or death at the workplace. Workshops or training models to heighten awareness of safety and vigilance among workers working in the vicinity of

forklifts, would greatly reduce the risk of accidents. An established system of maintenance of forklifts and other equipment at the workplace, as well as strict adherence to implementation of safety measures would go a long way in ensuring a risk free environment for employees and employers. OSHA “ offers training and educational materials that help businesses train their workers and comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Act.”(osha. gov/dte)

OSHA conducts on site inspections without prior notice with a staff of highly trained compliance officers. It looks into worker complaints and areas where imminent danger is perceived or high rates of injury are reported. Employers are expected to comply with OSHA standards and OSHA’s duty clause expects “ employers to keep their premises free from recognized safety hazards.” (Osha. gov/law)

Works Cited

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