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# **FORKLIFT SAFETY LESSONS FOR THE SAFE PEDESTRIAN *(Concise)***

**Leader's Guide, Fact Sheet  
& Quiz**

Item Number: 4286  
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***This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation.***

## **PREPARING FOR THE MEETING**

Here are a few suggestions for using this program:

- a) Review the contents of the Fact Sheet that immediately follows this page to familiarize yourself with the program topic and the training points discussed in the program. The Fact Sheet also includes a list of Program Objectives that details the information that participants should learn from watching the program.
- b) If required by your organization, make an attendance record to be signed by each participant to document the training to be conducted.
- c) Prepare the area and equipment to be used for the training. Make sure the watching environment is comfortable and free from outside distractions. Also, ensure that participants can see and hear the TV screen or computer monitor without obstructions.
- d) Make copies of the Review Quiz included at the end of this Leader's Guide to be completed by participants at the conclusion of the presentation. Be aware that the page containing the answers to the quiz comes before the quiz itself, which is on the final page.

## **CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION**

- a) Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person an opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.
- b) Introduce the program by its title and explain to participants what they are expected to learn as stated in the Program Objectives of the Fact Sheet.
- c) Play the program without interruption. Upon completion, lead discussions about your organization's specific policies regarding the subject matter. Make sure to note any unique hazards associated with the program's topic that participants may encounter while performing their job duties at your facility.
- d) Hand out copies of the review quiz to all of the participants and make sure each one completes it before concluding the training session.

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### **FACT SHEET**

**LENGTH: 9 MINUTES**

#### **PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:**

Forklifts can be very dangerous for both operators and employees out on the floor. In fact, 20 percent of all forklift incidents involve pedestrians being struck by a lift truck. In such an incident, it's the pedestrian that will suffer an injury or even death. These workers can avoid this by paying attention to the surroundings, staying a safe distance away from forklifts and following proper procedures. That's the purpose of this program—to show viewers the precautions they can take to prevent serious, often traumatic injuries that occur when forklifts come into contact with pedestrians.

Topics include the importance of forklift safety, operating characteristics of forklifts, walking safely around forklift traffic, staying out of the path of a forklift, operator and pedestrian awareness of one another, following safe work practices and avoiding unsafe acts.

#### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

After watching the video, the viewer will be able to explain the following:

- Why forklift safety is so important;
- What operating characteristics make a lift truck dangerous to pedestrians;
- How to stay safe while walking in close proximity to forklifts;
- What to be on the lookout for when working near forklift traffic;
- What safe work practices to follow and which unsafe acts to avoid around forklifts.

#### **PROGRAM OUTLINE**

##### **IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY FOR FORKLIFT OPERATORS & PEDESTRIANS**

- People and forklifts—they work as a team. While forklifts do the heavy lifting, people are responsible for the planning.
- They're the brains behind the brawn; and, whether on or off the powered industrial truck, safety needs to be job number one.
- Powered industrial trucks, commonly called forklifts, can be very dangerous, both for operators and pedestrians. In fact, 20 percent of accidents in this area involve pedestrians being struck by a truck.
- To stay safe, operators must go through specific training and take refresher courses.
- Anyone at any time can become a pedestrian. "Everyone's a pedestrian; that means everybody needs to understand how to move around the facility safely," says a worker. "There are just too many moving vehicles in the plant to walk around in a daze all the time."
- While traveling through the workplace, you have to be aware of equipment and this includes forklifts.
- To become familiar with them, you need a basic understanding of how they operate.
- "When you first get trained to go out on the floor, you've got to know more than just how to do your job. Your workplace is shared. There are all kinds of hazards, including big moving ones like forklifts," a pedestrian says. "You have to learn to navigate safely around them, kind of like being on the road and sharing the space with other cars."

##### **OPERATING CHARACTERISTICS OF FORKLIFTS**

- Forklifts are much heavier than cars and maneuver differently. They are specifically designed to fit in tight spaces.
- To do this, the steering is controlled from the rear. This generates a wide swing radius in the back. For instance, while turning left, the rear end will swing right.
- Operators are generally more focused on the load in front of them as well, so approaching a forklift from behind can put you in the driver's temporary blind spot.
- The back end can swing quickly if the driver backs up or changes direction. To remain safe, stay away from the rear end of the forklift.
- "Because the rear end swings wide, somebody walking can't just pass too close to a moving truck. It's too dangerous," a worker comments.
- Forklifts are designed to move material and this takes place in the front, on the forks. Every load is a different size and shape, but they all have the potential to cause an injury.

- “When you see a forklift, many times it’s carrying something and that load makes it heavier and harder to stop and harder to control,” adds another employee. “As a pedestrian, you know that makes that forklift much more dangerous. You’ve got to keep your eyes open at all times.”
- A load affects not only the stability of the truck, it also affects its stopping distance. A loaded forklift cannot stop suddenly and if an operator tries to because of a pedestrian in their path, the load can shift, crashing into the pedestrian.
- The forks are also designed to raise and lower loads. Obviously, the higher a load gets, the greater the damage if it should fall; therefore, never walk or work under raised loads.
- When the forks are low or on the ground, they become tripping hazards, so watch your step when walking around the front of a parked forklift.

### **WALKING SAFELY AROUND FORKLIFT TRAFFIC**

- While out on the factory floor, pedestrians travel along clearly marked pathways. Most of these are designed to keep pedestrians and forklifts a safe distance apart.
- They may consist of signs, painted lines and physical barriers. While traveling or working within these areas, there are rules to follow to help keep you safe.
- While traveling in a pedestrian walkway, keep within the walkway and keep moving. Blocking a walkway could force others to enter into the forklift path.
- Treat intersections like a public street: stop, look left, look right and left again. Listen for forklifts, then proceed when it's safe.
- Operators expect to see pedestrians at crosswalks and in aisles, but never assume the driver can see you. Stay alert and make eye contact.
- “Eye contact is key,” says an experienced employee. “Until you make eye contact with the driver, you have to assume, he doesn’t even know you’re there. “
- Look both ways before stepping into an aisle, around a corner or through a door leading into traffic. At blind intersections, anticipate that a forklift will be there until you see otherwise.
- Some intersections have mirrors to improve visibility. Get in the habit of slowing down, checking the mirror to see what's coming and then proceeding when it's safe to do so.
- Don't assume you know what direction a forklift will go in and never try to "beat" a forklift at a crossing. Distance is the best protection for pedestrians, so give forklifts plenty of room.

### **OPERATOR & PEDESTRIAN AWARENESS OF ONE ANOTHER**

- Some companies require a forklift to be completely stopped before approaching the operator. Others have a three or four foot safety zone around the forklift. Pedestrians should not come within this radius during operation.
- Forklifts should be seen and heard. Pedestrians should know the sounds of a forklift, such as the warning horn and the backup alarm.
- Operators should regularly test these vital devices and use them as necessary or where required; however, don't trust your ears. Electric forklifts can be completely silent and internal combustion units can be hard to hear if they're coasting or mixed into the sound of a busy factory.
- Hearing protection may also dampen their sound. To overcome this, diligently look for forklifts and equipment in all areas. Keep your head on a swivel, always alert.

### **FOLLOWING SAFE WORK PRACTICES/AVOIDING UNSAFE ACTS**

- Complacency around forklifts can set in the more we work around them.
- “As a pedestrian in a busy factory or warehouse, you could become immune to the noise of constant beeping horns or continuous movement of forklifts, but you better not,” a worker says. “Never let your guard down when you are in forklift traffic areas. One moment of inattention can result in injury or worse. You have to understand, the driver is concentrating on his load and may not be aware of you. It’s your responsibility to stay out of the way, even if you’re supposed to have the right of way.”
- While operators bear the largest responsibility to keep people safe around forklifts, pedestrians also play an important role in staying safe. Do not intentionally distract drivers and never engage in horseplay where lift trucks are operating; it takes a lot of skill and concentration to maneuver these heavy pieces of equipment.
- Pedestrians can also help operators by following good housekeeping.
- “Some people don’t understand the importance of good housekeeping,” comments a worker. “If your messy work area just flows out into a forklift aisle, and causes a truck to have to maneuver unexpectedly, there’s no telling what could happen.”
- Organize the work place to keep aisles and adjacent areas clear of obstructions.

- Promptly clean up spills and other hazards. Correct or report lighting problems that can affect visibility.
- Finally, pedestrians should pay attention to their surroundings first and foremost, not the documents they may have with them, or a cell phone, or even saying hi to coworkers. Make sure to watch where you're going and stay out of danger zones.
- “It should go without saying that you should watch where you’re going, but I am still amazed at people who walk around with their face stuck in a cell phone. That’s just careless,” says another pedestrian.
- If you see an unsafe behavior, either by an operator or pedestrian, report it. Your words may help prevent an accident.

## **CONCLUSION**

- Preventing an accident is better than experiencing one. In an accident between a forklift and a pedestrian, it’s the pedestrian that will suffer an injury or even death.
- Pedestrians can avoid this by paying attention to the surroundings, staying a safe distance away from forklifts and following proper procedures.

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**ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUIZ**

1. b

2. b

3. a

4. c

5. a

6. a

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**REVIEW QUIZ**

*The following questions are provided to determine how well you understand the information presented in this program.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What percentage of forklift accidents involves pedestrians being struck by a truck?
  - a. 10 percent
  - b. 20 percent
  - c. 30 percent
  
2. Forklifts are much lighter than cars.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
3. A pedestrian should never walk or work underneath the raised load of a forklift.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
4. At intersections, you should stop and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Look right and then look left
  - b. Look right, look left and right again
  - c. Look left, look right and left again
  
5. You should make eye-to-eye contact with a forklift operator before moving into a truck's work zone.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
6. If you see unsafe behavior, either by a operator or pedestrian, you should report it.
  - a. True
  - b. False