



Loading Dock Safety

The loading dock is one of the most hazardous parts of your operation because of the combinations of hazards and the volume of activities. Ramps, inclines, overhead obstructions, slippery surfaces, and inadequate trailer lighting, are common potential hazards. Fork lift operators are particularly at risk. Each year, several thousand injuries related to lift trucks occur in the workplace, and more than 100 people are killed annually. Practicing these simple tips will help you to perform your job safer:

- Make sure that workers do not operate a forklift unless they have been trained.
- Ensure that operator restraint systems are being used on sit-down type forklifts.
- Inform operators of sit-down type forklifts that they can be crushed by the overhead guard or another part of the truck after jumping from the overturning forklift.
- Designate areas for storage of used pallets, containers, and trash. Also limit the stacked height of used pallets and containers.
- Do not allow pedestrians in trailers while a lift truck is loading or unloading.
- Make sure lift trucks used to load/unload trailers are equipped with spotlights, also use dock mounted lights to supplement trailer lighting.
- Train all employees that work in dock areas on hazards. Do not make the mistake of limiting training to lift truck operators only.
- Use paint or tape to designate staging areas, aisles, and loading lanes. Make sure employees recognize the designations.
- Use wheel chocks for staged trailers, and keep in mind that dropped trailers are more susceptible to trailer creep.
- Be sure to wear a hard hat and other protective equipment when necessary.

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