Introduction

Industrial lift trucks (also known as lift trucks or forklifts) are used for handling materials, parts, products, tools, equipment, supplies and maintenance items. Forklifts are efficient for material handling because they are self-propelled, maneuverable and require only one operator to lift, transport, stack and unstack material. Forklifts are powered by battery, propane, gasoline or diesel fuel, and may be used for indoor or outdoor use depending on their size, tires and load capacities. The major factors that lead to injuries involving the use of forklifts include unsafe driving and material handling practices.

Scope and Application

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements for industrial lift trucks apply to all operation, servicing and maintenance of trucks. Departments who own forklifts are responsible for their proper maintenance and care and for ensuring that only authorized operators use the forklift. Departments who employ forklift operators are responsible for ensuring operators are trained and certified and that forklifts are operated in a safe manner.

Program Description

Training

All lift truck operators must be trained prior to operating a lift truck. Training is provided by EHS and consists of both formal instruction and operator evaluation. Training is both vehicle- and workplace-specific. Refresher training is required every three years or unless the operator is involved in a lift truck accident or is observed operating the truck in an unsafe manner.

Operator Evaluation

All lift truck operators must be evaluated for each truck they will be operating. Operators must be re-evaluated on each truck every three years.

Inspection and Maintenance

Industrial lift trucks must be inspected prior to each day of service. A daily inspection checklist must be completed and any defects should be reported and corrected immediately. A truck may not be placed into service if any defects are found during the inspection.

Roles and Responsibilities

Department

- Identify industrial lift trucks and lift truck operators
- Ensure lift truck operators are trained and evaluated
- Ensure lift trucks are maintained in good condition
- Take lift trucks out of service when defects are identified
- Have lift trucks repaired immediately

- Ensure lift truck operators are completing the daily inspection checklist

Supervisors

- Ensure lift truck operators are trained and evaluated
- Ensure lift truck operators adhere to proper/safe operating procedures

SMT/EHS

- Provide training
- Evaluate operators every three years
- Periodically audit the forklift operator program

Individual

- Attend training and evaluation
• Adhere to proper/safe operating procedures
• Complete the daily inspection checklist

For More Information

• Contact Safety Management Team at 9388-3838.
• OSHA’s Powered Industrial Trucks, 29 CFR 1910.178