

In this issue of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Listserv, June 15, 2016:

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1. Forklift Fouls – 10 Mistakes

The Industrial Truck Association annually in June highlights the safe use of forklifts and the importance of operator training. Forklifts, the most common type of powered industrial truck, originated in the United States in 1917. Forklifts are used to move and place materials, are extremely versatile machines, and operate in a wide range of environments.

In the United States forklifts account for 100 worker fatalities a year, 20,000 serious injuries, and 34,000 emergency room visits. The Industrial Truck Association estimates that 11% of all forklifts will be involved in some type of accident each year (assuming only one accident per forklift). Since the useful life of a lift truck is about 8 years, about 90% of all forklifts will be involved in some type of accident during their useful life.

Forklift safety is a multifaceted challenge. It includes proper training, appropriate vehicle maintenance, using the right type of machine for the job, and inspection of vehicle parts such as tires, lights and signals. Following are the top 10 forklift mistakes and how to avoid them:

- **Not knowing the forklift's capacity.** If a load is too heavy your vehicle will be unstable. Look at the forklift's data plate which contains the load capacity and more, but remember that the load capacity may have to be adjusted down to account for unique attributes of the load or forklift accessories. If the plate has been altered or obscured, a new plate should be obtained/affixed.
- **Not being aware of your route.** Forklifts have some inherent obstructions to an unimpeded view so safely maneuvering through the workplace requires extra vigilance. Make sure you are familiar with any obstacles in the intended path, including the potential for other vehicles/pedestrians in a dynamic environment. Avoid narrow passages.
- **Operating with difficult to secure loads.** Some loads, odd or unsymmetrical shape, can be more of a challenge to secure. Take extra care when moving objects that could be prone to toppling or affect your maneuverability.
- **No communication with workers around you.** Workers in the area may be focused on their own tasks or not hear your approach due to noise levels. Let

- people know what you are doing and where you plan to go. Don't get so focused on your own task that you are not aware of others in the area.
- **Slipping on entry or exit from the forklift.** Take extra care when entering and exiting a forklift. Make sure you are wearing suitable footwear that is not slick, use available hand-holds, and make sure the forklift is kept clean and dry.
 - **Inadequate battery and hydraulic fluid levels.** Without adequate power and appropriate levels of hydraulic fluid you may not be able to complete the job without a mechanical failure. Stopping partway could be dangerous.
 - **Operating a truck that hasn't been inspected.** Forklifts can be dangerous if not subjected to stringent inspections. Ensure your vehicle pre-operational and any other checklists are completed.
 - **Speeding with your forklift.** Moving at a speed improper for your forklift, load or environment is a common cause of accidents. Don't be in a hurry.
 - **Parking incorrectly.** Safety does not end when you exit the truck. Park only where authorized. Remember to lower the fork. Turn off the ignition.
 - **Misuse of vehicles.** Always operate with care and responsibility. Do not use forklifts for any purpose other than specified, no matter what the situation.

Be mindful of forklift safety and be part of the 10% never involved in a forklift accident. Remember, authorization to operate a forklift is subject to driver certification every three years. Contact EHS to schedule a certification review.

Resources

- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). *“Preventing Injuries and Deaths of Workers Who Operate or Work Near Forklifts”*
<http://www.toolboxtopics.com/Gen%20Industry/Forklift%20Fatalities.htm>
- EHS Safe Operating Procedure, ***Forklift/Powered Industrial Truck Safety***
http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/index_alph.shtml
- EHS Web-Based ***Powered Industrial Truck Training***
<http://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training#PIT>
- *“10 Forklift Fouls and How To Avoid Them.”* EHS Today digital edition. Mar 4, 2016. <http://ehstoday.com/forklift-safety/10-forklift-fouls-and-how-avoid-them>
- Tom Reddon. *“The 6 Most Overlooked Aspects of Forklift Safety.”* EHS Today digital edition. Jun 3, 2016. <http://ehstoday.com/forklift-safety/6-most-overlooked-aspects-forklift-safety>
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). *“Summaries of Selected Forklift Fatalities Investigated by OSHA.”*
https://www.osha.gov/dte/library/pit/fatalities_sum.pdf

2. Safety Shorts – Forklift Safety

This series features links to short safety resources each month. These videos talk about a variety of hazards widely applicable across the university, including field research, agricultural operations, landscape duties, maintenance operations, and more. The focus this month is forklift safety.

- **Forklift Safety – 8 Rules – Avoid Accidents & Injuries – Safe Forklift Operation Starts with You!** (Safety Memos, duration 3:28 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0LW4XsgP43s>
- **4 Facts 4 Forklifts – Safety Training Video – Prevent Forklift Accidents** (Safety Memos, duration 2:45 minutes)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4HR11Kvo_g
- **Forklift pedestrian safety** (PublicResourceOrg, duration 9:41 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vulPA6bt8>

NOTE: Resources are provided for informational purposes only. Publication does not in any way endorse a particular company or product or affect current UNL policies and procedures.

3. Hand Grinder Recall

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death associated with the use of thousands of types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. On May 11, 2016, the CPSC issued a recall for Robert Bosch Tool grinders due to risk of burns. The grinder being recalled can overheat while in use, causing the brush covers to melt and expose the end of the brush holder, posing a risk of burns to the user. If you have purchased a Bosch 1380 Slim small, 4.5-inch angle grinder with date codes 502 through 511 sold March 2015 through November 2015, immediately stop using this product and contact the company for a free repair.

You can access information on recalls of this and related items you may have purchased, such as grinders, sanders, and more through the CPSC web site:
<http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Recalls/2016/Robert-Bosch-Tool-Recalls-Grinders/>

4. Situational Preparedness – On the Move

Situational preparedness can encompass a wide variety of hazards such as fire, shooting, flooding, winter weather, gas leak, thunderstorms and more. Over the next few listservs we will look at a few situations where preparedness can prevent injury. The first situation we will look at is “people on the move.”

Within and at the periphery of all three campuses (City, East, Innovation) faculty, staff, students, visitors, vendors and community members move about in a variety of ways: walking, riding a bicycle, driving a motorized vehicle. When moving about we sometimes get caught up in our own thoughts, music, texts, phone calls and become a danger to ourselves and others. Thankfully on the UNL campus there has not been a fatality or serious injury....yet.

A July 2015 Listserv article with accompanying Safety Short videos highlighted the hazards of walking and texting, a condition that results in more accidents than texting while driving. Recent near-miss reports have indicated there have been a number of instances on the UNL campus where people who were texting or otherwise engaged with their cell phones stepped out from between parked vehicles directly into the path of an oncoming vehicle. Due to quick reaction time of the driver an accident was averted, some with literally inches to spare. In at least one instance, the person using the cell phone did not even seem aware, despite the screech of brakes, that they almost had been hit by a car! Cross every street at a crosswalk, NEVER step out between cars or from behind/in front of a bus.

Personal choices of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians can positively or negatively impact the likelihood of injury. Georgia Tech University, has developed a tutorial to raise awareness of the rights and responsibilities of pedestrians, motorists and bicyclists to help mitigate the hazards of people moving about campus by various means. The tutorial details various situations with information to help users learn the safe choice in various situations.

Another component of situational preparedness while “on the move” is selecting populated, well-lighted routes with even surfaces when traversing campus. It’s important to stay alert to all aspects of your surroundings including sounds such as traffic, someone coming up behind you, etc.

Review the resources provided for tips to keep yourself and others in your path safe. Rethink using your smartphone when you are “on the move,” whether on roads, paths or sidewalks.

Resources

- EHS *Listserv* http://ehs.unl.edu/ls_2015-07-08.pdf
- *Georgia Tech Road Safety* tutorial
<http://trains.gatech.edu/tutorials/RoadSafety/RoadSafety.php?SessionID=12322&EmplMSAID=64279>
- Geoffrey A. Fowler. “Texting While Walking Isn’t Funny Anymore.” *The Wall Street Journal*. February 17, 2016. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/texting-while-walking-isnt-funny-anymore-1455734501>
- UNL Emergency Preparedness “Really Obvious Walk” video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-9CcSnWR-c&index=21&list=PLh0k4GzppsqEyNcNx-fxPRIdpC-hERTQH>

5. Near Miss/Injury Incidents – Forklift, Box Cutter/Scissors

Forklift: A worker driving a forklift at UNL needed to lift a sweeper off a trailer onto the ground. Rather than take the time and effort to find straps and properly secure the equipment, the operator enlisted the help of a co-worker. The co-worker positioned themselves on the forks to provide counter balance and stabilize the load.

Luckily the equipment was lifted from the trailer to the ground without incident or worker injury.

The workers both indicated they made this decision in haste without thinking it through but realized afterward the potential for serious injury and reported through the EHS Near-Miss/Close Call online reporting system. When using a forklift all steps of safe operation must always be observed. In this instance they should have used straps to properly secure the load to the forks to prevent teeter-tottering of the load. Worker should never ride on the forks. In future these workers indicated they will be fully engaged in the task at hand and not act in haste.

Box Cutter/Scissor: A worker was using a box cutter to open and unpack a container. The worker did not consider the positioning of their hand in relation to the path of the box cutter and sustained a cut to their finger. In a similar injury incident involving scissors, the person lacerated their finger while they were deconstructing an item.

When using cutting devices focus on the task at hand and be mindful of the location/position of body parts in relation to the likely path of the cutting device.

The next time something happens in the workplace and you think “Wow, this could have turned out badly,” please take a few minutes to access the EHS Near-Miss /Close Call Reporter and share the information. If it was a near-miss for you, it is a good learning opportunity for your peers.

Resources

- EHS Near-Miss /Close Call Reporter
<https://scsapps.unl.edu/EHSNearMissReporter/>

6. Safety Poster – Replace Your Gloves

EHS provides a number of safety posters of relevance to the campus community. The poster highlighted this month serves to remind those who wear any type of glove as part of your Personal Protective Equipment ensemble that protective gloves, even those designed for multi-use, do not last forever. With use and over time, chemically resistant gloves degrade along seams, folds and flex points. Chemical permeation (letting chemicals through the glove) will occur before obvious signs of degradation. Inspect your protective gloves prior to each use and replace at the first sign of discoloration.



Request your FREE poster(s) today. Contact ehs@unl.edu or 402-472-4925 with your name, campus mailing address, and quantity desired. Review other FREE posters at: <http://ehs.unl.edu/safety-posters>. If you have an idea for a safety poster you would like to become available, contact Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, ehowe2@unl.edu, 402-472-5488.

7. A Quick Survey

Environmental Health and Safety is committed to excellent customer service and offers a *Customer Satisfaction Survey* as an easy method for the campus community to provide feedback on our services and staff. By taking a few moments to complete the survey (<http://ehs.unl.edu/survey>), you will be helping us to identify areas where we might need to focus our attention. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Please feel free to contact Brenda Osthus, EHS Director, at 402-472-4927 or bosthus1@unl.edu if you would rather communicate outside the parameters of this survey.

Remember...SAFETY IS AN ATTITUDE!

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