

NATIONAL  
**FORKLIFT  
SAFETY DAY**



In an effort to build a consistent message for National Forklift Safety Day, please review suggested general information below regarding forklift safety and the importance of operator training. These suggestions are intended only for your use in connection with National Forklift Safety Day. These are only suggestions. Please feel free to use your own language regarding forklift safety.

**NOTE: Only trained and certified individuals can legally operate forklifts.**

**I. Operator Training: It's the Law. OSHA Regulation: 29CFR1910.178(l)**

**A. The Employer**

- Must train
- Must evaluate
- Must certify
- Must re-train when:
  - Accident
  - Near miss
  - Observed unsafe behavior
  - Change in equipment or operating conditions
- Must re-evaluate every 3 years

**B. Why Operator Safety Training?**

- 70% of all industrial accidents are caused by operator error (National Safety Council).
- Effective training may reduce accident rates by 25-30% (OSHA).
- Operator performance scores improved by 61% following operator training (OSHA).

**C. No Underage Operators**

- Fair Labor Standards Act regulations prohibit individuals under the age of 18 from operating forklifts in non-agricultural settings.
- Minimum age for operators in agricultural settings is 16 years.
- Department of Labor forklift sticker can be used to emphasize the message:



# Fact Sheet



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## II. Training Program

### A. Overview

- Regulation Essentials:
  - Training
  - Evaluation
  - Certification
- Regulation Topics:
  - Fundamentals
  - Forklift-specific
  - Workplace-specific

### B. Fundamentals

- Know your forklift:
  - Right forklift for the job
  - Designated area
  - Daily check/test prior to operating
  - How to operate
- Know your application
- Stay alert
- Anticipate danger

### C. Forklift-Specific Training Topics

- Warnings, instructions
- Differences from automobile
- Controls, instruments
- Engine, motor
- Steering, maneuvering
- Visibility
- Forks, attachments
- Capacity
- Stability
- Inspection, maintenance
- Refueling, recharging
- Operating limits
- Operator's manual

### D. Workplace-Specific Training Topics

- Surface conditions
- Load composition and stability
- Pedestrian traffic
- Narrow aisles, restricted places
- Hazardous locations
- Ramps, sloped surfaces
- Closed environments, ventilation
- Other unique potential hazards

# Fact Sheet



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## Sample Operator's Daily Checklist

- Damage**  
bent, dented, or broken parts
- Leaks**  
drive unit, brakes, hydraulics
- Tires & Wheels**  
drive wheels, load wheels, casters
- Forks**  
in place, properly secured
- Chains, Cables, & Hoses**  
in place
- Hour Meter**  
operating
- Battery**  
water level, vent caps in place, cleanliness
- Battery Connector**  
cracked, burnt, tight fitting
- Guards**  
overhead, load backrest, battery retainer
- Horn**  
sounds
- Steering**  
no binding, no excessive play
- Limit Switches**  
travel limit, lift limit, tilt limit, etc.
- Safety Devices**  
flashing lights, indicator lights, fall arrest device, warning labels, etc. in same condition as equipped
- Travel Controls**  
all speed ranges, forward & reverse, no unusual noise
- Hydraulic Controls**  
raise/lower, tilt forward/backward, reach in/out, sideshift right/left, no unusual noise
- Brakes**  
stop truck within required distance, work smoothly, brake override functions
- Parking Brake**  
seat, hand, foot
- Battery Charge**  
discharge meter in full green or 75% charge after raising forks
- Power Disconnect**  
cuts off all electric power
- Attachments**  
function properly, no unusual noise