

Safety guide for businesses

We're serious about forking safety, and you should be too. If you employ forklift operators, this guide will help keep you, other workers and visitors at your site safe. There are three main reasons why workers are killed or seriously injured in forklift incidents in NSW:

- 1) Being hit or crushed by a forklift
- 2) Being hit or crushed by a load that the forklift is moving
- 3) Being crushed in a forklift tip-over

Pedestrians are most at risk of being hit by a forklift if they are:

- walking alongside it
- picking stock off a nearby shelf
- walking in between it and a delivery vehicle
- stepping into its path, or assisting with loading/unloading.



Keep 'em separated

The best way to make sure people are not hit by a forklift is to keep them away from forklifts, by using physical barriers like guardrails or overhead walkways. Where this is not possible:

- schedule work so that forklifts and pedestrians are not in the same area at the same time
- clearly mark walkways and safe work zones for pedestrians
- make pedestrian crossings, ideally with boom gates or red/green traffic lights
- provide dedicated loading and unloading areas for delivery vehicles
- have a designated exclusion or safety zone for delivery drivers, and wherever possible prevent them from entering the loading area to assist with the loading and unloading of their vehicle.

Use safety devices

If your forklift doesn't have these safety features, consider retro-fitting them or hiring a forklift with these fitted:

- "Smart" technologies like proximity devices to trigger signals, boom gates and warning signs.
- Warning devices like reverse lights, flashing lights, beepers, quackers and focus beams.
- Speed-limiting devices to reduce forklifts to a walking pace when operating near pedestrians
- Operator visibility devices like side mirrors and reverse cameras

Don't lose your load

Most serious injuries and deaths related to a falling load happen when the load isn't stable on the pallet, or because the operator did not use an attachment when one was needed. Typically, workers are most at risk of being hit by a falling load when they are trying to help the operator stabilise it, load or unload, or generally if working within striking distance.

To ensure their load is safe:

- use a suitable forklift for the load, with the correct load capacity
- use and maintain the forklift in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- provide and use stillage bins where appropriate
- supply suitable attachments for the types of loads to be moved
- provide training to staff on loading and unloading procedures and the use of attachments

Information for this article was sourced from www.safework.nsw.gov.au. For further forklift safety information contact MLA Holdings on 131 652 or www.mlaholdings.com.au.