

### Three add-on features to enhance your forklifts safety

**Studies show that thousands of fatal or near-fatal accidents are still happening every year in warehouses.**

Amongst the causes, visibility is a major issue. With more than half of forklift accidents seriously injuring workers on foot, it's clear that more should be done to give pedestrians better warning when a truck is getting too close.

This article zooms in on what you can add to your forklift to enhance safety. For now, we will skip topics like proper driver training, creating a safer environment and workplace inbuilt safety systems. Working safely in a place where forklifts operate is part of a much wider safety topic which cannot possibly be covered in a short article.



#### 1. Audible alarms

As obvious as it may 'sound', you should first make sure your forklifts have audible alarms – and that they are working properly. Good drivers will use the horn when approaching corners, but the truck must also have a reversing alarm with a distinctive sound, so pedestrians can recognise and anticipate this even greater hazard.

#### 2. Blue spot lights / strobe lights

When a workplace is busy or noisy, however, you can't always rely on auditory cues to know where trucks are. If many forklifts are in action, or if there is a lot of background noise from machinery, it may be difficult for pedestrians to hear the truck that's just about to come around a corner.

Your forklift is probably already fitted with standard safety lights, but a blue spot light is a good additional safety accessory; it certainly enhances the visibility of oncoming forklifts to pedestrians. This feature projects an intense spotlight or line over 6 metres in front and/or rear of an operating forklift, alerting nearby traffic and workers to its presence. This is particularly useful in giving an early warning that a forklift is approaching a blind corner, or is entering or exiting a trailer, a container or a warehouse door. Strobe lights can also serve as a good visual warning.

#### 3. Safety zone system

A further advance on the blue spot idea is the safety zone system. It uses high-powered LEDs to project bright, bold red lines on the floor behind and to the sides of a truck. This is the 'safety zone' (see picture). These lines clearly show all workers the minimum distance they must maintain to continue working safely. When a workplace is busy, this extra visual aid simply makes all the difference.

If people stray inside the danger area, the driver may be warned by a buzzer or some other alert system. The safety zone system is one of those quick solutions which can be fitted to both used and new trucks and is easily understood by employees.

Although add-ons enhance overall safety, the improvement they make is a functional one. As a Manager, it is important that you find the right balance between your forklift's capabilities and your drivers' safety skills. Achieving an acceptable safety level is always the result of a larger, ongoing program.

For further forklift safety information or quotations to include any of the three add-on safety features, contact MLA on 1300 000 652 or [www.mlaholdings.com.au](http://www.mlaholdings.com.au). Information for this article was sourced from [www.forkliftbriefing.co.uk](http://www.forkliftbriefing.co.uk).

Call: **1300 000 652**