

TOOLBOX TALK: INSPECTION OF FORKLIFTS AND POWERED INDUSTRIAL TRUCKS

Importance of Pre-shift Inspections

A general inspection is the first thing you should do before operating a forklift or other powered industrial trucks (PITs). Skimming over the inspection checklist could easily result in missing defects with the equipment, which could result in serious injury to the operator or other coworkers.

Cracked hoses or defective electrical components are the most commonly found issues when conducting a pre-shift inspection.

COMMON SAFETY RULES FOR FORKLIFT AND PIT OPERATORS:

- If you find an issue during the pre-shift inspection, be sure to note it on the checklist and bring it to your supervisor's attention. If the issue is a critical component on the checklist, take the forklift out of service, write a work order, and place a tag on the forklift warning others not to use it.
- Always fasten your seat belt. If your forklift doesn't have a seatbelt, inform your supervisor and write a work order to get one installed.
- A parked forklift should have the forks flat on the floor, all controls set to neutral, and have the parking brake set.
- Never leave a forklift with the engine running or power on.
- When moving a load up or down an incline, you should always have the load facing uphill.
- When traveling without a load, keep the forks approximately four to six inches off the floor.
- Never walk or allow anyone else to walk under a raised load.
- Always stop at blind corners to check for other traffic or pedestrians in the area. Honk your horn and look before you proceed.
- When carrying a tall load that blocks your forward vision, drive in reverse and turn your head so you can see where you are going.

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