

Industrial Safety



ACCIDENTS INVOLVING TRUCKS

Very many people are injured and too many killed every year as a result of accidents involving trucks. Most of these accidents are caused by someone breaking the safety rules. Increased legal demands on trucks and operators have resulted in a drop in the number of accidents. In order that this improvement should continue it is important that prescribed rules and regulations are followed.



Collisions with pedestrians are the most common type of accident and account for almost 50% of the total number of accidents. This shows the importance of being observant and careful when driving a truck. Some 80% of all body injuries are to arms, legs, hands, or feet. Injuries to ankles and feet are easily the most common of these.

THE EMPLOYER'S OBLIGATIONS

The employer is obliged by law to inform his employees on special health and accident risks related to their work and on how risks may be avoided. It is the responsibility of the employer to see that an employee who lacks the necessary experience to carry out a particular task, does not attempt to do so before he has received the required training and supervision.



THE EMPLOYEE'S OBLIGATIONS

The employee must cooperate in creating a satisfactory work environment. He must follow directives given and use the protective equipment supplied. He must also take adequate care where necessary in order to prevent accidents and reduce risks.

Anybody who, without good reason, knowingly removes protective equipment or deliberately ignores safety rules can be prosecuted.

Operators responsibilities

BASIC REQUIREMENTS

A forklift truck must only be operated by specially trained operators who have the necessary authority. Ideally, an operator must be at least 18 years of age and have the physical and mental qualities required for such work.



WHEN NOT TO OPERATE A FORKLIFT TRUCK

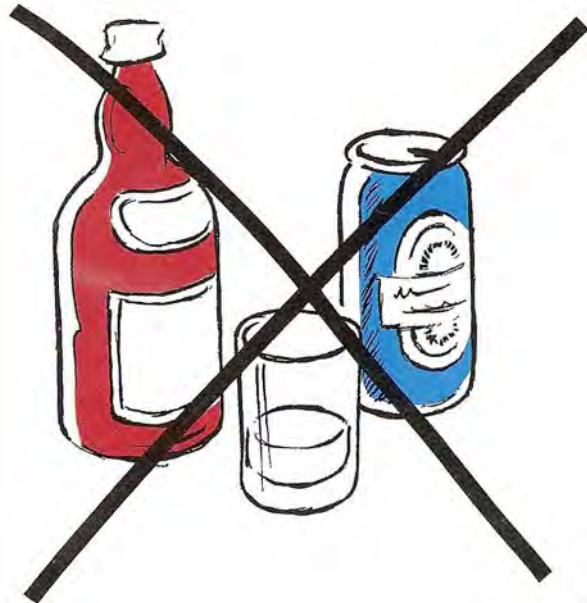
If the operator's state of health constitutes a safety risk, he or she must not be allowed to operate a truck. If you are ill, tired or feel you are not up to doing your job for some other reason, you must refuse to operate your truck. It is stupid to tempt fate and place your own life and the lives of your workmates at risk.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Since a truck is considered to be a motor vehicle in law, a truck operator may be fined or sent to prison for drunken driving. The offence is not limited to public roads only, and can therefore apply in factories and warehouses.

If your doctor prescribes tranquilisers you must check with him that it is safe to drive a forklift truck whilst under their influence.

A truck must under no circumstances be operated by a person under the influence of alcohol or other stimulants.





THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

Even small quantities of alcohol have an effect on you and increase the risk of an accident occurring.

When you are under the influence of alcohol your eyesight becomes weakened and your range of vision becomes narrower. Furthermore, colour awareness suffers and your brain functions more slowly. You underestimate risks and overestimate your abilities. Muscle reactions are slowed and your movements become awkward and imprecise. Your colleagues may notice this even if you are unaware of it.

IT TAKES SO LITTLE

The alcohol content in your blood reaches the prescribed limit after you drink a couple of cans of beer. If you are also tired or in poor health, the alcohol will have an even greater effect.



THE DAY AFTER

If you have consumed spirits, you must remember that the body needs time to "sober up". Most people who have consumed spirits think that they are sober long before this is really so. If you drink 2-3 cans of beer or 10 cl spirits, it takes 4-5 hours before the body has burnt up the alcohol. There is no way in which you can shorten this period and it does not help to do something like taking a sauna or jogging.

Remember that your reactions and balance are adversely affected the following day, even if the alcohol in your blood has disappeared.

A TRUCK OPERATOR'S AUTHORITY

A truck operator has the right and responsibility to:

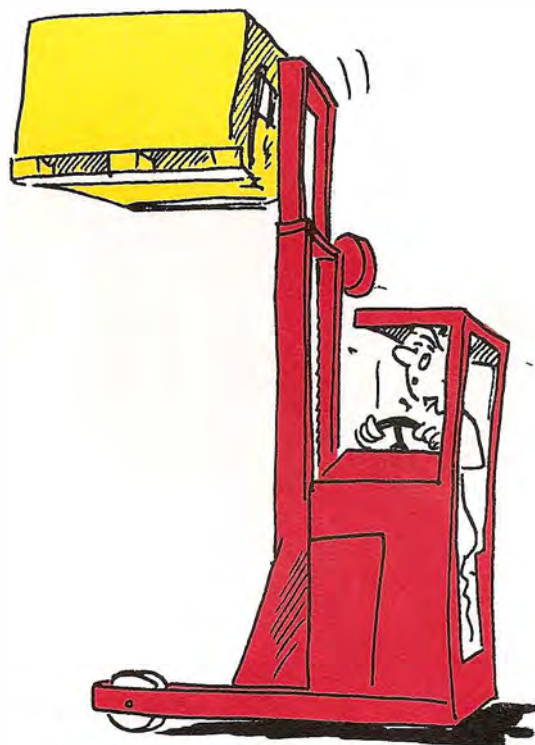
- prevent unauthorized persons from using the truck for which he alone is responsible.
- refuse to operate a truck that is not entirely safe.
- prevent persons from riding on the truck or walking under raised loads.



RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LOAD

As a truck operator you operate an expensive truck and handle loads of great value. You are responsible for the load on the truck. Therefore, never handle a load that is insecure or that in any way may constitute a safety risk. As the operator, you have the right to refuse to handle any load you consider to be a safety risk.

A careless or poorly trained operator can also cause costly damage to buildings, pallets, racking and loads.



RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TRUCK

A truck must be kept clean and serviced so that it is always in good working order. The truck operator is responsible for the daily inspection and the company for regular maintenance and repairs. The truck must always be in a sound, safe condition.

Reporting accidents

NARROW ESCAPE OR ACCIDENT

That which results in a narrow escape on one occasion can lead to an accident on the next occasion. It is often the circumstances at the workplace which determine the seriousness of an accident and, in general, one can say that one accident occurs for every ten incidents.

The reasons behind every major incident must be determined. Therefore, it is important that all incidents as well as accidents are reported to the management.



A number of positive results are achieved by reporting narrow escapes, e.g:

- Increased knowledge of the risks that exist
- A more positive attitude towards works safety
- Closer contact between employees, safety officers and management
- The implementation of preventive action before accidents occur

REPORTING INJURIES AT WORK

All injuries at work must be investigated and reported. These reports are later sent to the Inspectors of Factories, who compile statistics from which valuable information can be obtained, e.g:

- A basis for preventive action at the company
- A basis for research and studies
- A basis for instructions and directives
- The results of implemented measures, instructions and directives



ACCIDENTS RESULTING IN SERIOUS PERSONAL INJURIES

If an accident occurs involving serious personal injuries, the injured person must receive immediate attention from trained medical personnel. Inform the management and safety officer immediately, and cordon off the scene of the accident. The company is obliged to inform the Inspectors of Factories without delay in the case of fatal accidents or accidents involving serious personal injuries. The accident must be investigated and the question of legal proceedings considered.

The company reports to the Inspectors of Factories

The Inspector of Factories arrange and investigation.

The office of the Health and Safety Executive considers the case and may bring charges against

- the truck operator and other employees
- the employer
- the truck operator, the employer and other employees

Monitoring Safety

SAFETY OFFICERS

Most large companies employ safety officers. In the event of there being more than one safety officer, one of them may be appointed head safety officer with the responsibility of coordinating all activities in this field.

If you have any views on environment questions at your work place you should, in the first instance, turn to your supervisor. Thereafter, you should turn to the safety officer and he will further your opinions to the management.



MONITORING HEALTH AND SAFETY NATIONALLY

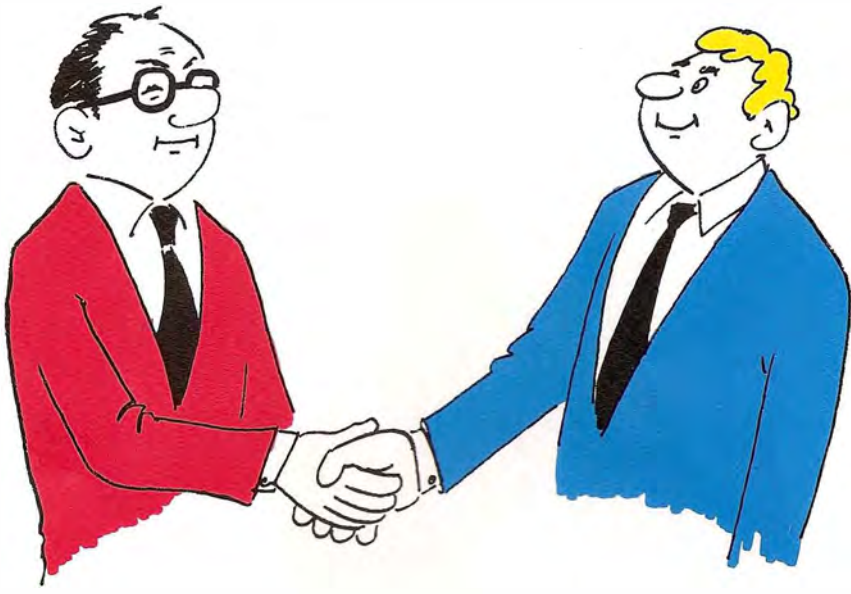
Factories Inspectors and Environmental Health Officers have the responsibility of monitoring work environment legislation at the national level. Their responsibilities also extend to legislation concerning dangerous goods, products dangerous to the environment and working hours.

They have the right of access to your workplace, and should they consider something to be dangerous, to represent actual risk to life and limb, they can stop that job or activity immediately. This applies regardless of whether or not it results in your company losing orders.



SAFETY AGREEMENTS

Most employers have an agreement between themselves and the unions, regulating the function and setting-up of safety committees. This is a collective agreement and is based on co-operation in matters relating to work environment.



Dangerous goods

DANGEROUS GOODS

Dangerous goods are goods which are explosive, flammable, corrosive, poisonous, radioactive or which possess other properties which can be harmful to health or to the environment. A considerable number of loads transported include dangerous goods. Therefore, since you are a lift truck operator you should have a basic knowledge of this field.



TRANSPORT REGULATIONS

Safety regulations for the transportation of dangerous goods have been worked out by the different branches of the transport industry.

The reason there are different regulations is that the same type of accident can involve different risks depending on the mode of transport used. A fire in a lorry is usually not so serious as a similar fire on board an aeroplane or ship.



EXAMPLE OF WARNING LABELS

