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Edited by Bruce Hulberg

## Forklift Safety: Newsletter



**Safety and Rescue Training**

for high-hazard work activities

**Confined Space  
Fall Protection  
Excavation  
Forklift**

### Forklift Train the Trainer Schedule

**April 12 - Boardman  
April 19 - Eugene  
May 24 - Medford**

Register online at:

[www.d2000safety.com](http://www.d2000safety.com)

or email:

[bhulberg@d2000safety.com](mailto:bhulberg@d2000safety.com)

**Have a forklift safety story or photo to share?**

Please send it to Bruce at:

[bhulberg@d2000safety.com](mailto:bhulberg@d2000safety.com)

We will not publish company or individual's names. You can also contact Bruce to be added to our newsletter email.

Our programs reflect:

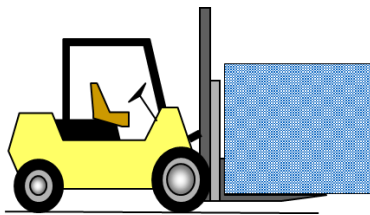
**ANSI/ASSE Z490.1-2009** *Criteria for Accepted Practices in Safety, Health, and Environmental Training*

## Fork Length - What Does It Matter?

As a forklift operator you may not pay much attention to the length of your forks because they are the same length every day when you get on your forklift. But there are several principles involving fork length that you should keep in mind.

### Load Support

If you handle a variety of products you need to be sure that your forks extend far enough under the load to provide enough support. As a general rule Hyster recommends that your forks extend at least two thirds of the way under the load. However you must consider the characteristics of your load. Your forks would certainly need to extend completely under the load when handling unbanded or loose material.



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### Fork Extensions

For some applications using fork extensions might make sense. But remember that using such attachments has the potential to change the center of gravity of the load by moving it farther away from the load backrest and therefore would affect the capacity of your forklift.

For loads where the weight distribution is uneven be sure to place the heavy side of the load against the load backrest.

### Stacking/Unstacking

If your forks are longer than your load you may risk damaging product as you stack and unstack your load. Therefore you need to be aware of how far your forks stick out from the other side of your load. A best practice would be to space your stacks of product with enough room so the tips of the forks won't damage or tip over the product behind.



### Borrowing a Different Forklift

Have you ever examined all the forklifts at your facility to find out how long their forks are? I measured the forks at one facility and found that they ranged in length from 40 1/2 inches to 52 1/2 inches. Imagine for a moment, that your forklift breaks down and you need to borrow another forklift. If you normally use 52 1/2 inch forks and you borrow the forklift with 40 1/2 inch forks you might have a problem. The reverse would also be true.

