

Summer, 2019

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

November 12 - Eugene
December 10 - Wilsonville

Register online at:

www.d2000safety.com

or email:

bhulberg@d2000safety.com

Have a forklift safety story or photo to share?

Please send it to Bruce at:

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 *Criteria for Accepted Practices in Safety, Health, and Environmental Training*

Slow, Fast, Too Fast?

How fast should a forklift travel? The question is asked often, but we know there is no single answer. There is, however, a process we can use to determine the answer. Begin by asking these questions.

What are the load characteristics?

The load's coefficient of friction, dimensions, weight, shape, and how it is packaged all need to be assessed. In other words, how stable is the load? Is it prone to slide off your forks? Are you close to capacity? Does the load require the operator to drive in reverse?

What surfaces are you driving on?

Asphalt, concrete, gravel, indoors, or outdoors may all require different speeds. Is the surface smooth, full of potholes, covered with debris or objects? For outdoor operating surfaces different weather conditions (ice, snow, hail, rain) can make the surface slippery and these conditions can change frequently.

What are the characteristics of the specific forklift?

Over time an individual forklift can develop tendencies. Controls may "feel different", the steering could be looser, the brakes more sensitive, or the suspension may be softer. The truck still passes inspection but these tendencies may require slower speeds.

Are there specific site hazards?

Blind intersections, pedestrian and vehicle traffic, low clearances, narrow aisles, tight turns, and inadequate lighting will require slower speeds.

How experienced is the operator?

Each operator has a different experience/skill level. It would be foolish for a beginner to try and keep up with a production level operator.

So, how fast is too fast? While we want to hit our production goals, an accident will ensure that we don't. While it makes sense to have speed limits, remember that many lift trucks do not have a speedometer, although they will have a governor to will limit the speed. (Keep in mind that a truck can still tip over at lower speeds.)

A best practice is to gain some insight on speed limits from your operators, since they are the ones who can best answer these questions.

