

CSRMA

Bulletin Series

NEW! OSHA Forklift Training Standard

Introduction

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has new training standards for the more than 1.5 million workers who operate such equipment. The new standards require a training program based on the trainee's prior knowledge and skill, types of powered industrial trucks used in the workplace, hazards in the workplace and the operator's demonstrated ability to handle a powered industrial truck safely. Evaluation of each operator's performance is required as part of the initial and refresher training, and at least once every three years.

Background

The final rule will apply to several industries including General Industry (1910), Shipyards (1915), Marine Terminals (1917), Longshoring (1918), and Construction (1926). The effective date of the new training requirements is March 1, 1999. Initial training and evaluation of current industrial truck operators must be completed by December 1, 1999 and new operators must be trained and evaluated before assignment to operate a powered industrial truck.

Training Requirements

The OSHA training requirements incorporate safe operation, training program implementation, training program content, refresher training and evaluation, avoidance of duplicate training, and certification.

Safe Operation

CSRMA members must ensure that every powered industrial truck operator is competent in the operation of a truck prior to operating as proven by the successful completion of the required training.

Training Program Implementation

Individuals who have the knowledge, training, and experience to train and evaluate potential operators must conduct all operator training and evaluation. Training will include a combination of formal instruction, demonstrations and practical exercises performed by the trainee, and an evaluation of the operator's performance. Practical exercises must be performed under the direct supervision of trainers and where the practical training does not endanger the trainee or other employees.

Training Program Content

Trainees must be initially trained in the following truck-related and workplace-related topics:

TRUCK-RELATED

- ✓ Operating instructions, warnings and precautions for type of truck
- ✓ Similarities and differences to automobiles
- ✓ Control and instrumentation location and use
- ✓ Engine or motor operation
- ✓ Steering and maneuvering
- ✓ Visibility
- ✓ Fork and attachment limitations and use
- ✓ Vehicle capacity
- ✓ Vehicle stability
- ✓ Vehicle inspection and maintenance
- ✓ refueling or charging batteries
- ✓ Operating limitations
- ✓ Other operating instructions, warnings or precautions listed in the operator's manual

WORKPLACE-RELATED

- ✓ Surface conditions where truck is used
- ✓ Load composition and stability
- ✓ Load stacking, unstacking and transport
- ✓ Pedestrian traffic
- ✓ Narrow aisle and restricted area operation
- ✓ Operation in hazardous locations
- ✓ Ramp and sloped surface operation
- ✓ Unique or potentially hazardous conditions
- ✓ Operating the vehicle in closed environments

Because powered industrial trucks are manufactured by different companies with various models available, the training must be specific to the operating characteristics of the specific powered industrial truck the employee will be using.

Evaluation and Refresher Training

The standard requires that an evaluation of the performance of each powered industrial truck operator be conducted every three years. Additionally, refresher training should be conducted so employees retain the ability to safely operate an industrial truck. This retraining should also be used if any of the following are true:

- ✓ there is reason to believe that unsafe acts have been committed,
- ✓ an accident or near-miss occurs,
- ✓ an evaluation reveals a deficiency,
- ✓ assignment to a different type of truck,
- ✓ or a workplace condition changes that would effect truck operation.

Certification

CSRMA members must certify that every operator has received appropriate training, has been evaluated and has demonstrated competency in performing the operator's duties. The name of the trainee, date of training and signature of the designated evaluator will be included in the certification.

Avoidance of Duplicate Training

If a current or new truck operator has been trained in any of the required training elements and is authorized to operate a specific truck in a specific environment, the operator does not need to be retrained in these elements if the employer certifies the operator is competent.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q:

What is a powered industrial truck?

A:

The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) defines a powered industrial truck as a mobile, power-propelled truck used to carry, push, pull, lift, stack, or tier materials. Powered industrial trucks--more commonly known as pallet trucks, rider trucks, forktrucks or lifttrucks--can be ridden or controlled by a walking operator. They can be powered through electric or combustion engines and designed for a variety of applications

Q.

What is the stability triangle?

A.

The majority of counterbalanced industrial trucks have their weight supported on three points. Even on a four-wheeled truck, the front two drive wheels are two points on the stability triangle, while the back two steering wheels (which are connected on a central pivot) support the weight at the rear and make the third point. When these three points are connected with imaginary lines, the stability triangle is formed.

The stability triangle is useful in explaining the stability of a powered industrial truck. An unloaded truck on a level surface will have a center of gravity in the middle of the stability triangle. As a load is added to the truck or if the truck is on an inclined surface, the center of gravity will move within the stability triangle. If the center of gravity moves outside of the stability triangle, the truck will tip over.

Q.

What is considered formal training?

A.

A formal training is the combination of different forms of classroom training including lecture, discussion, videotape, interactive computer learning, or written material.

Sources for More Information

- 29 CFR 1910.178, Powered Industrial Trucks.
- Federal Register, (63)230, December 1, 1998, pp. 66237-66274
- Federal Register, (60)49, March 14, 1995, pp. 13782-13827.
- ANSI/NFPA 505 Powered Industrial Trucks including Type, Areas of Use Maintenance, and Operation, 1992 Edition