

LOADING AREAS

Safety Topic V6-0533

Materials Handling, Warehouse, Walking-Working

Loading areas are often high-traffic areas with workers, materials, equipment, and a variety of hazards. Loading areas may be occupied by forklifts, pallet jacks, or other heavy equipment and they can also be congested with materials and workers performing different types of tasks.

As a consequence, workers should be aware of loading area hazards, including:

- Struck-by hazards
- Falls from heights/docks
- Slips and trips
- Protruding materials
- Falling objects
- Sharps hazards
- Heat stress/cold stress
- Caught-between equipment and materials
- Back injuries from lifting and other ergonomic issues



- When walkways are blocked by pallets or other materials it is important to stop and carefully push or carry the items out of the way. Never kick materials or empty pallets when attempting to clear a path.
- Walk, never run, while in a loading area.
- Be aware of loading dock edges. Do not attempt to jump off or onto the loading dock. Always use the access steps and ladders provided.
- Stack empty pallets flat, not leaning up on their sides.
- Beware of laceration and puncture hazards when packing or unpacking crates or boxes. When cutting shrink wrap, boxes or other material, direct the blade away from your face and body.
- Clean loading areas regularly.
- If you are unsure of safety rules or operations, stop and ask for clarification.
- If you see a hazard either correct it or report it.

Discussion

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What are effective ways to prevent slips, trips, and falls in loading areas?

What safety precautions are important when loading docks are used in a loading area?