

Powered industrial trucks, commonly called **forklifts** or lift trucks, are used in many industries, primarily to move materials. They can also be used to raise, lower, or remove large objects or smaller objects on pallets, in crates, or other containers. Note, according to OSHA, over-the-road haulage trucks and earth-moving equipment that has been modified to accept forks are not considered powered industrial trucks.

**OSHA Standard 1910.178** covers the requirements for forklifts of all types including rough terrain forklifts, telescoping or boom forklifts, and industrial forklifts. For other mechanized equipment such as loaders, graders, and excavators look to OSHA Standard 1926.600.

## Only trained and certified operators allowed!

- The first and most important rule to follow with forklifts – get trained!
- Many injuries to both the operator and their co-workers occur because the user of the forklift was not trained in the specific model and type of forklift they tried to use.

**OSHA Standard 1910.178(l)(1)(i)** states *the employer shall ensure that each powered industrial truck operator is competent to operate a powered industrial truck safely, as demonstrated by the successful completion of the training and evaluation specified in this [standard].*

- Safe operating procedures depend on the specific type of lift. Not all forklifts work the same.
- Always remain a safe distance from forklifts in use and keep away from the swing area of the forklift.
- Never stand on or under the forks of the lift.
- Never use a forklift to raise or lower people unless it is designed and equipped for that use.
- Always pay attention to horns and back-up alarms from all heavy equipment, including forklifts.
- If operating any heavy equipment, always use seatbelts.

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