

# FORKLIFT SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU.

## GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS



If you employ forklift operators, this guide will help keep you, other workers and visitors to your site safe.

There are three main reasons why workers are killed or seriously injured in forklift incidents in NSW:

1. Being hit or crushed by a forklift
2. Being hit or crushed by a load that the forklift is moving
3. Being crushed in a forklift tip-over.

### KEEP PEOPLE AND FORKLIFTS SEPARATED

Fully loaded, a standard forklift and its load can have a combined weight of five or more tonnes. People are most at risk of being hit by a forklift if they are:

- Walking alongside it
- Picking stock off a nearby shelf
- Walking in between it and a delivery vehicle
- Stepping in to its path, or
- Assisting with loading/unloading.

### Keep them separated

The best way to make sure people are not hit by a forklift to keep them away from forklifts, by using physical barriers like guardrails or overhead walkways. Where this is not possible:

- Schedule work so that forklifts and people are not in the same area at the same time
- Clearly mark walkways and safe work zones for people
- Make pedestrian crossings, ideally with boom gates or red/green traffic lights
- Provide dedicated loading and unloading areas for delivery vehicles
- Have a designated exclusion or safety zone for delivery drivers, and wherever possible prevent them from entering the loading area to assist with the loading and unloading of their vehicle.

### Design a safe workplace

- Have a traffic management plan and site safety rules, to manage the risk of vehicles colliding with people

- Give traffic management and site safety training to your workers and visitors to the site
- Install dome (convex) mirrors at intersections and blind corners
- Install warning and traffic management signs.

### Use safety devices

If your forklift doesn't have these safety features, consider retro-fitting them or hiring a forklift with these fitted:

- "Smart" technologies like proximity devices to trigger signals, boom gates and warning signs
- Warning devices like forklift to worker proximity sensors, reverse lights, reverse sensors, flashing lights, beepers, quackers and focus beams
- Speed-limiting devices to reduce forklifts to a walking pace when operating near people
- Operator visibility devices like side mirrors and reverse cameras.

### DON'T LOSE YOUR LOAD

**Most serious injuries and deaths related to a falling load happen when the load isn't stable on the pallet, or because the operator did not use an attachment when one was needed.**

Typically, workers are most at risk of being hit by a falling load when they are trying to help the operator stabilise it, load or unload, or generally if working within striking distance. To ensure their load is safe:

- Use a suitable forklift for the load, with the correct load capacity
- Use and maintain the forklift in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- Provide and use stillage bins where appropriate
- Supply suitable attachments for the types of loads to be moved
- Provide training to staff on loading and unloading procedures and the use of attachments
- Contact the transport company or load supplier before delivery, to work out if the load needs an attachment.

## When using an attachment

Forklifts are designed to lift, lower and move loads that are placed on pallets or skids that have integral lifting pockets. Where this is not the case, you should consider using an attachment and:

- Prior to purchase or fitment, check the forklift manufacturer will approve the attachment for use on your forklift model
- Take in to account the size, shape and weight of the load
- Ensure the attachment is suitable for the load.

Various attachments are available to shift an unusual load, like extension tynes (slippers), drum handlers, jibs, bin lifters, grabs, carpet spikes, and carton clamps. Fitting an attachment will usually de-rate the capacity of the forklift. If approved by the forklift manufacturer (or a competent person) the forklift capacity plate should be amended to include the model number or type of attachment fitted and the capacity rating when that attachment is used.

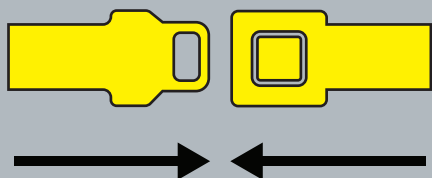
### BELT UP

**In the event of a sit-down counter balance forklift tip-over or collision, operators are more likely to be killed or seriously injured if they don't wear a seat belt. Normal human instinct is to jump free from a forklift in the event of a tip-over; however, in many instances, operators have been crushed and killed by the overhead guard.**

Forklift seat belts are designed to:

- Prevent the operator from jumping or falling out, in the event of a tip-over
- Prevent the operator from being thrown out, in the event of a collision
- Keep the operator out of harm's way, in the event of a falling load.

### ALWAYS FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELT



Make sure your operators wear their seat belt:

- Include seat belt wearing in your site rules
- Check seat belts or approved operator restraints are fitted to all of your forklifts
- If seat belts are not installed, retro-fit one in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Consider fitting a seat belt system that prevents the forklift from being driven without the seat belt being buckled (called a seat belt interlock).

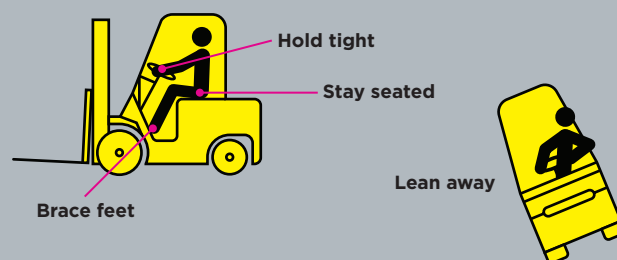
To reduce the likelihood of a tip-over, ensure forklifts are used in a suitable environment with consideration given to kerbs, gutters, rough terrain, sloping surfaces, obstacles, loading platforms/docks, speed bumps, other vehicles, bad weather.

### Eight simple safety tips:

1. Make sure forklift operators have a current and valid licence
2. Check forklifts daily before use – and report any faults or damage
3. Talk to your workers about forklift safety regularly.
4. Ask your workers about their views on forklift safety
5. Give forklift operator refresher training at least annually and following a near miss or incident
6. Supervise your workers and ensure you give them feedback on how safe they are working
7. Value and reward safe behaviour
8. Ensure high visibility clothing and other appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used at all times.

**For more information on forklift safety see [safework.nsw.gov.au](http://safework.nsw.gov.au) or call 13 10 50**

### COUNTER BALANCE FORKLIFT TIP-OVER EVENT



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**NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU.**

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