



# ALABAMA MUNICIPAL INSURANCE CORPORATION MUNICIPAL WORKERS COMPENSATION FUND, INC.



## *Loss Control Division*

### **FORK LIFT SAFETY**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Person Conducting: \_\_\_\_\_

*Meeting Objective:* To review basic rules and procedures pertaining to proper fork lift use.

Driving a fork lift is a serious responsibility. The average car weighs about 2000-3000 pounds. Many fork lifts weigh twice this much and when carrying a load a fork lift can easily weigh over 15000 pounds. Obviously, major damage will occur to anything that a fork lift hits or runs over. **\*\*Instructors note - all employees should be formally trained in safe fork lift operations before actually being allowed to operate a fork lift.**

*Remember:* Always think about working safely. It only takes one wrong or careless move to cause serious injury to yourself or one of your co-workers.

You should be aware of the following information regarding fork lifts:

1. Only trained and authorized employees should drive a fork lift.
2. Operating a fork lift requires skill, knowledge, and compliance with safety rules.
3. Fork lifts should be inspected at the beginning of each shift to ensure that all parts are functioning properly.
4. Fork lifts that are in need of maintenance or repair should not be operated.

The following rules and regulations should be observed when using fork lifts:

1. **All** fork lift drivers must be licensed operators.
2. Observe the company speed limit at all times when driving a fork lift. Slow down on wet or slippery floors, in areas where space is limited, or when turning corners.
3. Avoid backing a fork lift for long distances. Keep hands, arms, and head inside the roll cage when backing through tight areas and doorways.
4. Always face in the direction of travel.
5. Come to a complete stop before passing through doorways and at blind corners. Warn pedestrians of your presence by sounding the horn.
6. Avoid making quick starts, jerky stops, and quick turns, particularly when the forks are loaded. Allow a lift to come to a complete stop before reversing directions. Clanging gears "on the fly" is extremely hard on the equipment and is prohibited.
7. Check a semi-trailer personally to be sure the wheels are properly chocked before entering the trailer on a fork lift. Many fork lift drivers have been killed or suffered broken bones when their fork lift fell between the dock and a trailer.
8. A fork lift operator should inspect trailer floors for broken or rotted boards before driving into a trailer.
9. Drive carefully and slowly over the dock plate only after it has been secured.
10. Do not allow passengers to ride on fork lifts.

11. When carrying a load down a ramp, back down with the load following.
12. On an upgrade, proceed up with the load in front.
13. Keep clear of the open edge of loading docks when operating a fork lift.
14. Keep loads as close to the floor as possible when moving. Never operate a truck with empty forks in an elevated position.
15. Lower forks to the floor when parking a fork lift. Do not leave an engine running when you dismount a lift.
16. Always tilt a load against the back rest before moving.
17. When stacking material, always return the tilt to the vertical position before lowering the load.
18. Never allow anyone under a suspended load on the forks, or even under empty forks.
19. Never stand on the forks of the lift in order to perform elevated jobs.
20. Always follow proper basic, and fire safety procedures when refueling internal combustion powered units or recharging battery powered units.

*At this time, perform a fork lift inspection. Ask workers to describe fork lift accidents and near misses that they have witnessed Discuss what happened; why it happened; and what precautions could have been taken to prevent it from happening.*

**SIGNATURES OF ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE**


NOTE: This document is not intended to be legal advice. It does not identify all the issues surrounding the particular topic. Public agencies are encouraged to review their procedures with an expert or an attorney who is knowledgeable about the topic. Reliance on this information is at the sole risk of the user.<sup>1</sup>

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