

Forklifts and people don't mix

WorkSafe's expectations for separation of pedestrians and forklifts



The problem:

Pedestrians and forklifts interacting



- **80 incidents involving forklifts and pedestrians have occurred in 2010 (so far)**
 - > All involved serious or potentially serious injury
 - > 1 fatality occurred in January
 - > 48 involved pedestrians being struck by forklifts
 - > 10 involved truck drivers being struck by forklifts during loading / unloading activities
- **The consequences of these incidents include:**
 - > Death, serious injury, hospitalisation and long-term physical and emotional impacts
 - > Loss of income, lifestyle, and morale
 - > Intervention by WorkSafe – leading to possible legal action
 - > Impacts on workplace morale, employee relations, and bottom line

The law:



What employers and employees must do

- **The Occupational Health & Safety Act requires employers to:**
 - > Identify hazards
 - > Control risks
 - *Eliminate* risks so far as reasonably practicable
 - If it's not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, the risk must be *reduced* so far as reasonably practicable
- **In relation to powered mobile plant, employers must:**
 - > Reduce or eliminate the risk of powered mobile plant colliding with pedestrians or other powered mobile plant
- **Employees must:**
 - > Take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions
 - > Cooperate with their employer regarding any action taken to comply with health and safety requirements

Pedestrian and forklift separation:

What employers must do



- Ask 'are forklifts really necessary for the work to be done?'
 - > often a less hazardous alternative item of plant could be used instead of a forklift, eg. hand or powered pallet truck, electric tug, tow tractors



Powered tug



Tow tractor



Hand pallet truck



Powered pallet truck

Pedestrian and forklift separation:

What employers must do



- **Develop a comprehensive Traffic Management plan for the workplace that includes:**
 - > Mechanisms for consultation with employees
 - > Policies and procedures
 - > Provision of information, instruction and training for:
 - forklift operators (including Licensing, competency and truck loading / unloading operations)
 - other employees at the workplace
 - truck drivers (particularly in relation to loading / unloading)
 - visitors / contractors
 - > Supervision of operations
 - > Expectations for compliance with policies and procedures
 - Disciplinary procedures for non-compliance
 - > A process to monitor and review how well the system is operating

Pedestrian and forklift separation:

What employers must do



- Put controls in place that **physically separate** pedestrians from areas where forklifts operate at all times – where practicable
 - > Separation can be achieved by:
 - Barriers
 - Permanent
 - » gates, fences, guard rails
 - Temporary
 - » plastic bollards / fencing
 - Work scheduling that prevents pedestrians being in the same area at the same time as operating forklifts
 - Exclusion zones / safety zones
 - Electronic systems to prevent pedestrian and forklift interaction
 - Proximity sensors
 - Speed limiters



Pedestrian and forklift separation:

What employers must do



- An assessment of forklift operations will be required to determine the **actual separation distance** and **type of barriers** that will be needed, including:
 - > The type of load being carried (height, width, weight)
 - > Forklift operating speeds
 - > Any physical barriers or electronic systems already in place
- It may be necessary to install signage / mirrors at key points to supplement physical separation measures
- If there is any likelihood of powered mobile plant colliding with pedestrians or other powered mobile plant, the plant must be fitted with a warning device (eg. beepers, lights)

Painted lines on the ground are not an effective way to separate pedestrians from operating forklifts

Pedestrian and forklift separation:

Examples of permanent physical barriers

Permanent fences / guard rails / gates



Pedestrian and forklift separation:

Examples of permanent physical barriers



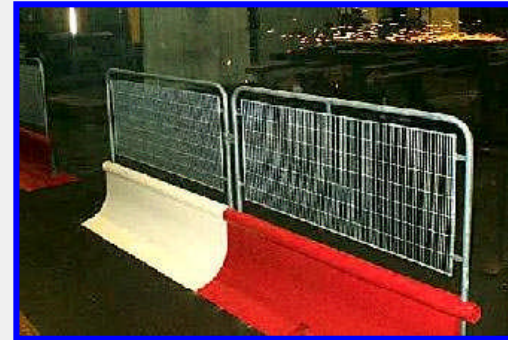
Permanent fences / guard rails / gates



Pedestrian and forklift separation:

Examples of temporary physical barriers

Portable extendable fencing



Mobile barriers – steel/plastic

Fold-down bollard



Pedestrian and forklift separation:

Examples of temporary physical barriers

T-top bollard / mesh



Retractable barrier / flashing light



Witches hats with extendable bars



Portable expanding barrier

Pedestrian and forklift separation:

Examples of supplementary controls



Mirrors



Signage and witches hats



Pedestrian and forklift separation:

What forklift operators must do



- **Hold the appropriate (and current) License to Perform High Risk Work (Forklift)**
- **Abide by the policies and procedures of the workplace**
- **Remain within designated forklift operating areas at all times**
- **Only operate a forklift if there are no pedestrians in the vicinity**
- **Maintain control over any truck loading / unloading activities**
 - > reinforce workplace policies and procedures in relation to driver exclusion from areas where loading / unloading takes place
 - > ensure drivers use designated safety zones or other system established at the workplace
- **Inform a supervisor or manager of breaches of workplace policies, procedures or controls by other employees or contractors / visitors (including truck drivers)**

Pedestrian and forklift separation:

What forklift operators must not do



- **Engage in any of the 7 'Deadly Sins' of forklift operation:**
 - > Driving too fast (especially with a load, or whilst turning)
 - > Travelling with a raised load (above front wheel height)
 - > Failing to look in the direction of travel prior to moving (especially when reversing or turning)
 - > Travelling with an unsecured, unstable or unbalanced load
 - > Show evidence of collisions (either on forklift or structures, eg. walls, doors, corners, racking, bollards)
 - > Travelling with a load that obscures forward vision
 - > Turning with a raised load
- **Breach any controls put in place to prevent forklifts interacting with pedestrians at the workplace**
- **Operate a forklift if *any person* is in the vicinity**

Pedestrian and forklift separation:

What pedestrians (and truck drivers) must do

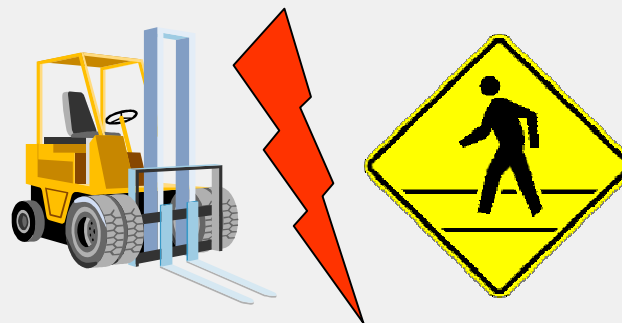


- **Abide by the policies and procedures of the workplace**
- **Observe designated pedestrian areas / exclusion zones / safety zones at all times**
- **Truck drivers must cooperate with any instruction provided by a forklift operator or supervisor at the workplace in relation to loading / unloading activities**
 - > Abide by workplace policies and procedures in relation to exclusion from areas where loading / unloading takes place
 - > Ensure they use driver safety zones or other system established at the workplace at all times during loading / unloading
- **Inform a supervisor or manager of breaches of workplace policies, procedures or controls by forklift operators, other employees, or contractors / visitors (including truck drivers)**

Pedestrian and forklift separation: ***What Managers and Supervisors must do***

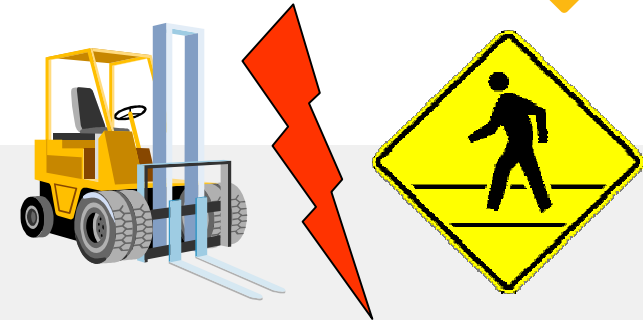


- Abide by – and enforce – workplace policies and procedures
- Supervise operations to ensure forklift operators and pedestrians (including truck drivers) observe exclusion zones / designated safety zones at all times
- Take appropriate action (in line with policies and procedures) to address any breaches of controls by forklift operators, other employees, or contractors / visitors (including truck drivers)
- Engage all employees and contractors / visitors in consultation when developing or reviewing policies and procedures that achieve physical separation of pedestrians and forklift operations



Pedestrian and forklift separation:

Summary of key principles



- Implement controls such as physical barriers or work scheduling that prevents any interaction between forklifts and pedestrians
- Develop a comprehensive traffic management plan in conjunction with all affected employees (and contractors / visitors)
- Train Supervisors and Managers to reinforce and monitor controls in place to manage risks from forklift operations
- Consider all employees when addressing forklift and pedestrian separation, such as office / administration staff, temporary / contract staff, and also visitors
- Induction, training and supervision must be carried out to ensure employees, contractors and visitors understand and adhere to workplace policies and procedures in relation to forklift / pedestrian separation
- Review the traffic management plan at regular intervals to ensure it continues to achieve the highest level of control possible