

ELEVATING PERSONNEL WITH FORKLIFTS

Forklifts are a versatile tool on construction sites for lifting materials and elevating personnel. When elevating personnel there are very strict requirements that must be followed to protect the employees being elevated. There are many dangers present when elevating employees in a man basket that the operator and employees need to be aware of prior to performing the operation:

- Employees falling out of the man basket.
- The man basket falling from the forklift.
- The forklift tipping over.
- Tools or parts falling out of the man basket.
- Striking overhead hazards.

Man baskets, when used properly, are a much safer alternative than elevating personnel on the forklift forks, a pallet, or similar open platform.

The type of environment you are operating in will dictate what type of forklift is to be used. If the lift is to be performed inside and on a smooth and level surface, a counterbalanced forklift will be the best choice. If the work area is outside or at a construction site with rough, uneven terrain, a rough terrain forklift will be the best vehicle for the task.

The entire process of elevating personnel starts with the use of an approved work platform that is in compliance with all applicable safety standards. Only man baskets that meet ANSI design and engineering standards should be used. Shop made or site made man baskets are not allowed for use when elevating personnel with a forklift. The following information shall be provided on the work platform:

- Maximum work load, including personnel and equipment.
- Weight of empty platform.

Make certain that all restraining devices such as railings, chains, cables, or gates are in place, not damaged, and fully functional. Personnel entering the man basket with full body harnesses and lanyards must inspect them and identify any damage prior to entering the work platform. Replace any damaged equipment that is identified.

OPERATING WITH WORK PLATFORMS

Operation of the man basket must be done by following all applicable safety standards:

- Any forklift being used to elevate personnel must be done with an experienced, certified forklift operator.
- The work platform must be securely attached to the forks or to the lifting carriage. The platform must have guardrails to prevent workers from falling off the edge of the platform, and a toe board to prevent materials from falling off the platform.
- When working on the platform, workers have the potential to come in contact with shear points like chains. There must be some type of guard in the area between workers and the mast to prevent this type of contact from occurring.
- If the man basket is fork mounted, ensure that the forks are prevented from pivoting upward. If the forklift is equipped with a rotator, deactivate the rotation.
- The platform must be centered left to right on the lift truck mast.
- Never tilt the platform forward or backward when occupied or elevated.
- Do not exceed the load limits for forklifts equipped with a man basket.
- Maintain the minimum safe operating distance from power lines and transformers. Minimum of 10 feet up to 50kv. Use the Minimum Safe Approach Distance (MSAD) chart for voltages above 50kv.
- Never allow the use of steps or ladders to increase height while in the man basket.

ELEVATING PERSONNEL

- Before elevating personnel, forklift travel controls must be in neutral and the parking brake set.
- Be certain the mast or boom travel is vertical. Do not operate on a side slope unless the rough terrain forklift is level.
- Be certain that the path of the platform travel is clear of hazards, such as
 - Electrical wires
 - Overhead obstructions
 - Scaffolding
 - Storage racks
- Before elevating personnel, the work area must be marked by a barricade, caution tape or danger tape, etc..., to warn of work by elevated personnel.
- When workers are on the platform, there must be an operator manning the lift equipment while the workers are performing the job. NEVER leave a forklift with workers on the platform unattended.



Company: _____

Location: _____

Topic: _____

Date: _____

WEEKLY SAFETY PROGRAM REVIEW AND PRESENTATION

1. Remind all employees that it is their right to a safe work place. Each employee is responsible to report and respond to unsafe work practices and conditions.

2. Review of recent incidents, injuries, and reported near misses.

3. Recent observations, safety violations, and demonstrated lack of knowledge or skills.

4. Employee suggested corrective actions for avoiding future reoccurrences.

5. Existing and upcoming work activities and potential hazards. Include review of supporting materials or documents and demonstrate safe work procedures.

6. Employee workplace safety concerns and recommendations.

7. Safety topic presentation. Include review of company policies, procedures, and location specific expectations. Encourage questions and clarifications.

8. Additional meeting notes.

Company: _____

Location: _____

Topic: _____

Date: _____

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