

NEW OSHA REGULATIONS

FORKLIFT OPERATOR TRAINING

EFFECTIVE at 10 DECEMBER 1999

Employers are now required by law to ensure that their industrial truck operators receive both hands-on and formal (classroom) training by a qualified instructor. Your workplace must implement a Forklift Operator Training Program to meet the new OSHA Regulations

Effective March, 1999, the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) of the U.S. Department of Labor released new regulations that must be complied with by 01 December, 1999, on Powered Industrial Truck Operator Training.

Under prior OSHA regulations, employees were left to their own devices to determine the scope of their training programs. This approach is viewed as contributing to more than 80 deaths each year due to Industrial Truck accidents. At the very least, this approach resulted in disputes between OSHA inspectors and employers, and a realization that further refinements were needed.

Under the new regulations, all industrial truck operators in all industries are included in OSHA Standard 29CFR1910.178. That includes but is not limited to Construction (1926), General Industry, Shipyards (1915), Marine Terminals (1917) and Longshoring operations (1918), with the exception of Agricultural Operations.

All industrial Truck operators hired BEFORE 01 December 1999, must receive the required training and written evaluation BEFORE 01December 1999, and the company must maintain an operator file with proof of adequate training.

All industrial truck operators hired AFTER 01December 1999, must receive the required training and written evaluation BEFORE they are allowed to operate the equipment, and the company must maintain an operator file with proof of adequate training.

HERE ARE A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NEW RULES:

The new standard applied to operators of almost all specialized gasoline, diesel, electric and liquefied petroleum gas industrial trucks, **including forklifts**, platform lift trucks and walk behind hand trucks. The rules do not apply to certain

compressed air trucks, farm vehicles or vehicles primarily intended for earth moving or over the road hauling.

Training must be tailored to the work site and consist of a combination of formal instruction (e.g. lectures), practical training (e.g. demonstrations) and an evaluation of the operators performance.

Operators must be trained on 22 subject areas. Training must include site specific training and specific truck instruction. Training classes must be documented. Copies of lesson plans must be on file.

Refresher training must be provided to operators in several circumstances, such as an accident or near miss incident. The performance of all operators must be evaluated at least once every three years.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO COMPLY?

It is the law! And, it's the right thing to do. Eliminating hazards in the workplace is the right thing to do and it makes good business sense. In addition to OSHA compliance, other benefits can include: less chance of employee injury, reduced workers compensation rates, lower forklift maintenance costs and less product damage.

SO, WHERE DO YOU START?

The full text of the new regulations is available through the OSHA web site at <http://www.osha.gov/>

THE KEY DATE IS: DECEMBER 1, 1999

Act Now! All industrial Truck operators hired BEFORE 01December 1999, must receive the required training and written evaluation BEFORE 01 December 1999, and the company must maintain an operator file with proof of adequate training.

All industrial Truck operators hired AFTER 01December 1999, must receive the required training and written evaluation BEFORE they are allowed to operate the equipment, and the company must maintain an operator file with proof of adequate training.