

## news & notes

### **FORKLIFT STABILITY**

The center of gravity of an unloaded forklift is just below the operator's seat. Having the forklift's weight balanced over the center of gravity helps keep the forklift stable and prevents tipovers.

However, with a load, the center of gravity shifts. As long as the center of gravity remains inside a triangular area formed by the front wheels and the center of the rear axle, the forklift is stable and won't tip over.

This triangular area is known as the stability triangle. If you draw a line between the front wheels and then a line back from each wheel to the center of the rear axle, you can clearly see the stability triangle.

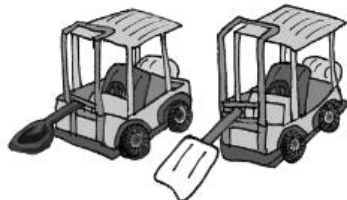
Adding a load and then raising the forks causes the center of gravity to shift toward the base of the triangle. If the load is too heavy or poorly balanced, the center of gravity can shift outside the stability triangle, and the forklift is likely to tip over.

Conditions that can affect stability include:

- Ground conditions;
- Speed of travel;
- Grade;
- Load;
- Tire inflation; *and*
- Operator skill, knowledge, and judgment.

Other possible causes of tipovers include:

- Exceeding load capacity;
- Excessive speed when turning;
- Traveling with load raised too high; *and*
- Braking suddenly with load raised.



**SPOON LIFT    SPATULA LIFT**

**Failed prototypes before the fork lift.**

# EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

**October 2011**

**Provided by Hierl Insurance, Inc**

## **Safe Practices for the Warehouse**

### *Know how to stay safe*

All warehouses need good housekeeping to be safe. Aisles should always be unobstructed—if not, they may block evacuation and cause falls. Likewise, slippery, wet, or icy floors frequently cause falls. Unstable or uneven walking surfaces need to be repaired, and all areas should have adequate lighting.

Storage areas should have stable, sturdy shelving to prevent injuries from falling items or shelving collapse. Furthermore:

- All storage should be appropriate for the types of materials to be stored.
- To prevent injuries, where possible, common items should be stored at heights that do not require excess stretching or bending by workers.
- Some hazardous materials may require special storage conditions.
- All containers must be clearly labeled, including any necessary warnings.

Powered equipment reduces worker injuries, but it presents its own hazards, such as these:

- Workers can get caught in conveyors or run down by forklifts.
- Operators of powered equipment need special training to operate it safely.
- Never try to operate powered equipment without proper training.
- If your workplace has a conveyor, everyone needs to know how to shut off the equipment in an emergency.
- Don't even think of riding on a conveyor—it's never safe!

Forklifts are common in warehouses, so take these precautions:

- Always be aware of forklift traffic and driving lanes in the warehouse.
- Make sure forklift operators see you before approaching.
- Forklifts steer from the rear, so the back swings wide during turns and could hit you if you are walking beside it.

Hand trucks, dollies, and manual pallet jacks can be hazardous so:

- Choose the right hand truck for the job.
- Stack the load so that you can see over it. Place the largest, heaviest items on the bottom.
- Secure the load—strap it in place so it can't shift or fall off.
- Pushing is generally preferable to pulling.

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### EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

Earthquakes can happen anywhere! Make sure you know how:

- To participate in earthquake drills.
- To mount pictures and wall hangings securely.
- To keep desktop computers and appliances in restraints.
- To keep desk drawers and filing cabinet doors latched.
- To keep large equipment and furniture anchored to walls or floors.
- Where first-aid kits, flashlights, battery radios, blankets, dust masks, and blankets are located onsite.
- At least one safe place to go within their work area during an earthquake.
- How to get out of the building safely during an earthquake.
- How to locate members of their department and assist anyone who are injured.
- Who to contact about departmental personnel (location, injuries, etc.).
- How and under what circumstances to shut down power, gas, and water in the building.
- How to safely shut down critical processes if necessary.
- Which communication method to use after a quake, whether they were on or off the job when it occurred.
- Not to use any equipment that appears damaged.
- How to prohibit access to areas of the facility that appear unsafe.
- How to make temporary fixes to insure continuation of business.
- How to contact service providers.
- What to say to customers, suppliers, and other business partners about your company's status.



## Open Mouth, Insert Toothbrush

### *Oral health is key to overall health*

According to a report by the U.S. Surgeon General, poor oral health is a factor in life-threatening diseases that kill millions of Americans each year. For example, gum (periodontal) disease has been linked to heart and lung disease, diabetes, and several other serious health conditions.

October is **National Dental Hygiene Month**, so this is a good time to think about your oral health. If you're like many Americans, you don't take as good care of your teeth and gums as you should.

Consider these jaw-dropping statistics from the American Dental Hygienists Association:

- 50% of Americans do not receive regular oral health care.
- 75% of the U.S. population has some form of periodontal gum disease.
- 50% of all Americans aged 17 and under have had cavities in their permanent teeth.
- Only about 55% of people who floss do so every day. Women floss more than men and people over age 50 floss more than younger people.
- 75% of patients don't change their toothbrush as often as they should. Replace your toothbrush every 2 to 3 months and after illnesses, such as a cold or flu.

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## How to Get Leaves to Leave

### *Rake leaves safely*

Colorful autumn leaves are lovely falling past your window – until you look out and see that they've covered your lawn in an inch of now-brown, dried-out husks! How do you get rid of them in a way that's healthy for you and the environment? Try these options.

#### **For your health:**

- **Wear a mask** to protect your breathing.
- **Wear gloves** to prevent blisters.
- **Rake leaves onto a tarp** and drag the tarp to your dump spot to protect your back rather than raking a huge pile across long distances.

#### **For the environment's health:**

- **Use leaves to mulch your lawn** by using the mulching option on your lawn mower to mow over them.
- **Use leaves to mulch your garden** by adding them to a compost pile.
- **Use leaves to fill low spots** in your yard.
- **Use environmental brown bags** if you bag leaves.