

Safety first! Cat® Lift Trucks offers some tips and tricks to keep your staff alert.

Cat® Lift Trucks has launched a new safety video to highlight the most common mistakes.

No matter how successful a company is in operating forklift trucks, safety should be always a priority.

The journey toward improving safety should start with a thorough risk assessment of the company and its operations. Protecting the pedestrian staff and forklift truck operators with the latest devices goes hand in hand with encouraging a culture of safe lift truck operation on the site.

The layout and size of the operation are important factors to take into account to determine the most suitable solutions for your business.

The most common aids to warning pedestrians of approaching lift trucks include the clear blue spot light system and flashing beacons. In corners, potentially hazardous aisles and blind spots used by both pedestrians and forklifts, it's also advisable to think about two-way traffic light systems. The driver can set a red light to keep pedestrians away until the area is safe, and in the same way, a pedestrian worker needing access to the area can set a red light to keep out trucks.

Another consideration regarding pedestrian safety where barriers are needed is the placement of mirrors on the site to help operators and pedestrians see around corners and obstructions. At the same time, extra signage can be added to warn of hazardous areas and to reinforce safety instructions.

Sometimes the answer to a safety problem lies in a very simple practice rather than high technology. When pedestrian workers need to enter a warehouse aisle to inspect products, they can place a movable sign at the end of the racking, which tells lift truck operators to stay out. If the operator urgently needs access, he or she can walk over and ask the pedestrian to stand somewhere safe until the truck passes.

Training, behaviour and reporting

Training is always essential to site safety. Raising the level of knowledge of the staff by providing appropriate training can help in preventing accidents and damage to the goods and the structure of the building. This guidance applies not only to your operators but also to drivers of vehicles visiting the site, who should also follow its safety rules.

You could also think about adopting a behavioral safety programme in which forklift truck operators are encouraged to have 'safety conversations' with their colleagues and document them. These may result from, for example, observing an unsafe situation or an especially good practice. And this could additionally work as a positive incentive for your staff.

Suppliers and other professionals can be excellent sources of information, ideas and advice on safety. Go to your nearest Cat® lift trucks distributor for advice on your site.

TOP FIVE TIPS:

1. Ensure that staff at all levels receive regular health and safety training.

2. Register with the local health and safety government agency to receive regular bulletins on legislation and prosecutions – and assess whether you are compliant.
3. Make your risk assessments, method statements and safety handbooks easy to read and understand. Review them annually and after any incident.
4. Reinforce risk assessments and encourage employees to keep records, acknowledge documentation and ask for help.
5. Monitor staff to ensure they are complying with safe working practices and company policy, and make it easy for employees to raise questions and concerns, then follow them up and report back. This is a particularly useful hint!

Cat® Lift Trucks has just launched a new safety video that highlights in a simple but fun way the most common mistakes when operating a truck. [Click here](#) to see some advice on how to avoid making those basic but serious errors.