

LOSS CONTROL

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Powered Industrial Trucks

By: [Mike Huss](#)
Loss Control Supervisor

Powered industrial trucks (PIT's) commonly known as forklifts, pallet trucks, rider trucks, fork trucks or lift trucks are found and used in many industries and workplace operations. Powered by electric or internal combustion engines, there are seven different classifications of these very specialized vehicles commonly used to carry, push, pull, lift or stack materials of various sizes, shapes and weights. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), there are about 1 million forklifts used by 1.5 million workers. Approximately 95,000 people are injured, and 100 are killed annually while operating these useful but sometimes hazardous vehicles. According to OSHA, most of the injuries, accidents and property damage can be attributed to three main causes:

- * Failure to follow safe operating procedures,
 - * Lack of safety rule enforcement, and
 - * Insufficient or inadequate training.
- On a positive note, these accident causations can be controlled and corrected with foresight and effective supervision.

Training & Evaluation

According to OSHA standard Code 29 CFR 1910.178, "Only trained and authorized operators shall be permitted to operate a powered industrial truck." As a result, OSHA requires that each PIT operator to be over 18 years of age and be competent to operate these vehicles safely as demonstrated by the successful completion of training and evaluation. Training programs can be administered by the em-

ployer or through a third party acting on behalf of the employer. Training must be conducted by a person with the knowledge, training and experience to train PIT operators and evaluate their competence. Effective training must consist of a combination of:

Formal instruction (e.g., lecture, discussion, interactive computer learning, video, written material), Practical training (trainer demonstrations and practical trainee exercises), and Evaluation of the operator's performance in the workplace.

Training program content must consist of:

- * PIT related topics (e.g., operating instructions, warnings and precautions, controls and instrumentation, motor/engine operation, steering and maneuvering, visibility, vehicle attachments, vehicle capacity and stability, inspection and maintenance, refueling/charging, etc.)
- * Workplace-related topics (e.g., driving surface conditions, stability of the load, load stacking and unstacking, pedestrian traffic, aisles and restricted areas, operating in hazardous locations, operation on ramps and sloped surfaces, potentially hazardous environmental conditions, operating in closed or poorly ventilated areas, etc.)
- * Requirements of the applicable OSHA standard

Although there is no mandatory annual refresher training requirement, employers are required to certify that each PIT operator has received initial training and must re-evaluate each operator at least once every three (3) years. Furthermore, refresher training in relevant topics is needed whenever;

- * An operator demonstrates a deficiency in the safe operation of the vehicle,
- * Workplace conditions change in a way that could affect safe operation,
- * An operator is involved in an accident or near-miss,
- * An evaluation indicates need,
- * An operator is assigned to a different kind of PIT

Employer certification and evaluation of each operator must include the name of the operator, the date of training, the date of evaluation and the identity of person(s) performing the training or evaluation.

Documentation must also be maintained in the

operator's personnel file. Failure to certify any employee operating a PIT can result in costly OSHA fines and other penalties.

Operator Qualifications

Federal OSHA's Powered Industrial Truck standard has no requirement that the operator possess a valid, state issued driver's license. The employer must however, have a record documenting that the driver has successfully completed PIT training. This would be the only operating "license" required by OSHA. Also, even though there is no vision/hearing test requirement addressed in the standard, OSHA could still cite under the General Duty Clause (Section 5(a)(1) if an employer was aware of a physical impairment and still allowed an employee to operate a PIT.

In summary, reducing the risk of PIT accidents requires comprehensive worker training, systematic traffic management, safe equipment, and enforcement of safe work practices.

For assistance with this or any other type of safety and health program, please contact FirstComp Loss Control at (888) 500-3344 or email losscontrol@firstcomp.com

OSHA's Top 10 Violations in 2012

In fiscal year 2012, which ran from October 2011 through September 2012, federal OSHA conducted almost 41,000 workplace safety and health inspections. Here are the top 10 citations the agency handed to companies:

- Fall Protection – General Requirements ([1926.501](#)) Total violations: 7,250
- Hazard Communication ([1910.1200](#)): 4,696
- Scaffolding ([1926.451](#)): 3,814
- Respiratory Protection ([1910.134](#)): 2,371
- Ladders ([1926.1053](#)): 2,310
- Machine Guarding ([1910.212](#)): 2,097
- Powered Industrial Trucks ([1910.178](#)): 1,993
- Electrical Wiring Methods ([1910.305](#)): 1,744
- Lockout/Tagout ([1910.147](#)): 1,572
- Electrical – General Requirements ([1910.303](#)): 1,332

Safety News

By: [Kim E. Coonrod](#)
Loss Control Manager

5 million U.S. workplaces face new Hazcom training deadline in 2013

By Dec. 1, 2013, more than five million U.S. businesses must train about 43 million employees on the new label elements and safety data sheet (SDS) format included in OSHA's new Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) update.

What will employees need to know?

Labels: Chemical labels will include a signal word, pictogram and hazard statement for each hazard class and category. Precautionary statements may also be included.

Safety Data Sheets: These will now have a 16-section format.

Until the new standard takes effect in 2015, companies can use either old labeling and SDSs or the new versions and be in compliance either way.

[Training Requirements for the Revised Hazard Communication Standard](#)

Cal/OSHA Launches Heat Illness Prevention Campaign

Fresno, CA – With warm weather approaching, California's Division of Occupational Safety and Health on April 4 launched its 2013 Heat Illness Prevention Program.

The goal of the program is to prevent heat illness among California workers through compliance with the state's workplace safety regulations, the agency said in a press release. The campaign includes enforcement, outreach and training.

"By following the basic preventive measures of providing adequate water, rest, shade, training and emergency procedures at every outdoor worksite, we can avoid needless tragedies and make sure workers go home healthy after a hard day's work," Cal/OSHA Chief Ellen Widess said in the release.

[Cal/OSHA News Release 4/2013](#)

Health & Safety Calendar

May

National Electrical Safety Month
[Electrical Safety Foundation International](#)

June

National Safety Month
[National Safety Council Events](#)

July

National Fireworks Safety Month
[Prevent Blindness America](#)

Lessons from Losses

By: [Courtney Rosengartner](#)
Loss Control Technician

While operating a SCMI table saw, a man was injured when the board he was feeding through the machine kicked back and severely lacerated three of his fingers. He was transported by medical emergency personnel and had to stay overnight in the hospital undergoing surgery. He missed three months of work and was placed in a splint for six weeks. He had to endure painful physical therapy and still has permanent loss of motion in his fingers.

An inspection of the saw indicated no defect in the machine or safeguards. Kickbacks can occur when the blade catches the lumber and throws it back toward the operator. Kickbacks also occur if the blade height is not correct or if the blade is not maintained properly. Kickbacks are more likely to occur when ripping, rather than crosscutting. Kickbacks also can occur if poor-quality lumber is cut. However, in every situation, proper training on the equipment must be required. For safety tips, please visit, OSHA's information on table saws and kickbacks:

[OSHA Machine Guarding for Table Saws](#)

Top 10 Causes of Injury in the Workplace

According to the [2012 Liberty Mutual Workplace Safety Index](#), the most disabling workplace injuries and illnesses in 2010 amounted to **\$51.1 billion** in direct US workers compensation costs.

The top five injury causes—*overexertion, fall on same level, bodily reaction, fall to lower level, and struck by object*—accounted for 73.1 percent of the total 2010 cost burden. The remaining five injury causes in the top ten each accounted for less than 5.0 percent of the direct cost of disabling injuries in 2010. Overall, **the top ten cause categories comprised 89.9 percent of the entire cost burden** of disabling work-related injuries in 2010.

1. **Overexertion** — \$13.61 billion
 2. **Fall on same level** (*including slips, trips and falls*) - \$8.61 billion
 3. **Bodily reaction**—\$5.78 billion
 4. **Fall to lower level** — \$5.12 billion
 5. **Struck by Object** — \$4.10 billion
 6. **Struck Against Object** — \$2.11 billion
 7. **Repetitive Motion** — \$2.02 billion
 8. **Highway incident** — \$1.99 billion
 9. **Caught in/compressed by** — \$1.79 billion
 10. **Assault / violent act** — \$640 million
- Proper training along with appropriate safety products can significantly reduce if not eliminate these injuries along with the cost burden associated.

Class Focus: Building Material Dealers & Lumberyards



[Combustible Dust Explosions – Hazard Alert – OSHA](#)

[Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes](#)

[Ladder Safety – American Ladder Institute](#)

[Machine Guarding – Saws - OSHA](#)

[OSHA Safety and Health Topics Web Page](#)

[Personal Protective Equipment – OSHA](#)

[Powered Industrial Trucks – OSHA](#)

[Prevention of Slips, Trips and Falls – CCOHS](#)

[Safe Material Handling – American Supply Association \(ASA\)](#)

[Safety Training Resources for Building Material Dealers—TX Dept of Ins](#)

[Ten Safety Trouble Spots for Lumberyards and How to Avoid Them – SBMA](#)

[Wood Dust – Health Hazards - OSHA](#)

[Worker Safety Series – Warehousing—OSHA](#)

For information about any of FirstComp's Loss Control Services, please call (888) 500-3344 or email losscontrol@firstcomp.com.