



Lift Truck Operator Control Program

In addition to it being a law, implementing a lift truck operator control program can greatly enhance an organization's ability to control losses resulting from improper material handling.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) requires, as defined in part 190.178, that:

“Only trained and authorized operators shall be permitted to operate a powered industrial vehicle.”

Before starting a program, it is necessary to take some preliminary steps to insure its effectiveness.

1. Review your company's past accident reports. Analyze the number, types and causes of losses resulting from accidents. With this information develop what preventive measures should be taken to avoid those accidents from recurring.
2. The maintenance department should be involved from the beginning, to assist you in developing an effective program. They are knowledgeable about the equipment and responsible for keeping it in working order. Their involvement will benefit the trainers and operators.
3. Determine the length and type of training that the program will focus on. The training should include both classroom and hands on equipment operation. New drivers will be required to attend the program and experienced drivers should be encouraged to attend as well.
4. Select and train instructors. These instructors should have experience and a full understanding of the programs intentions.
5. Carefully select individuals to be trained as operators. They should have a good driving record for any type of vehicle, as well as display a good safety attitude. Operators should be in good physical condition, which includes:
 - a. acuity of vision
 - b. depth and color perception
 - c. reaction time
 - d. hearing
 - e. muscular coordination
6. Establish a record keeping system to document the program's activities.

Training Course.* It is based on 4 one-hour classroom sessions and 4 one-hour driving sessions. The length of the course and its parts can be altered and adopted to fit specific needs.

* National Safety Council - 444 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611 "Forklift Truck Training Course"

Session I — CLASSROOM

Part 1.	Introduction Remarks by key personnel Importance of program Emphasize hazards (Optional: Motivational movie or slides)	½ hour
Part 2.	Mechanics of a Fork Truck Center of gravity, load limits and balance	½ hour
Part 2A.	Improving Accident Experience Discussion of problems and violations Improve reports, forms, records and inspections	½ hour

Session I — Practice Area

Demonstration of Truck Control and Safety Devices	Trainees get feel of controls	1 hour
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Session II — CLASSROOM

Part 1.	Inspection and Maintenance Responsibility for maintenance Study some completed forms	½ hour
Part 2.	Safe Driving and Traffic Rules	½ hour

Session II — PRACTICE AREA

Practice Inspections and Basic Operations	Unloading with boxes on skids and pallets	1 hour
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Session III — CLASSROOM

Part 1.	Special Operating Rules Loading trailers and freight cars, a. aisles b. intersections c. ramps	½ hour
Part 2.	Stacking and Tying Capacities of floors, trailers and elevators	½ hour

Session III — PRACTICE AREA

Continued on reverse...

Demonstration and practice of all movements (with load)	1 hour
Loading trailer and freight cars	
Stacking and moving special shapes	

Session IV — CLASSROOM

Part 1. Emergency Procedures and Refueling	½ hour
(Battery charging optional)	
Accident and hazard reporting	
Review of safety and operating rules	

Part 2. Written Exam	½ hour
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Session IV — PRACTICE AREA

Part 1. Demonstration of Refueling	½ hour
(Battery charging optional)	

Part 2. Driving Test	½ hour
Maneuvers through obstacle course	
Presentation of certified operator cards, etc.	

A successful lift truck program does not end with formal operator training. Management must extend their responsibilities to other areas which affect the overall success of a good program. Management should consider areas where lift truck operating is performed. Clear and marked aisle ways with sufficient load capacity and level floor surfaces should be maintained. Adequate lighting mirrors placed where needed, and posted signs marking unsafe areas of operation.

Supervisors have the responsibility to observe and report unsafe operating practices, make recommendations that will enhance safe operation, and assist in the investigation of accidents involving lift trucks.

A good selection process and operator training program should minimize the need for a disciplinary program. However, discipline is sometimes necessary, and the procedures should be established and made known to all personnel. Operators with unsatisfactory accident records and rule violations may need closer supervision or more training.