

## Let's Talk Safety #4

# Forklifts: The Rights, Wrongs and Risks

### Rights:

- Inspect the forklift before using it for the day and have any problems fixed before you use it.
- Refuel only in safe or designated areas—and don't smoke there!
- Wear your seat belt while operating the forklift.
- Keep loads low (6-8 inches above ground), with the mast tilted slightly back while moving.
- Keep wide loads centered.
- Be sure you have overhead protection.
- Keep the load uphill on inclines.
- Drive in reverse if the load blocks your vision, except on slopes.
- Back out slowly after unloading, checking over your shoulder.
- Honk your horn before moving.
- Keep an eye out for others working around you, both on foot or in other pieces of mobile equipment.
- Park on flat surfaces away from traffic or in an area designated for that purpose.
- When stopped (such as when you park or will have the forklift parked while working around it to unload, etc.) lower and flatten forks, and set the parking brake.
- Remember to chock or block the wheels. Just resting the forks on the ground is not an alternative to chocking the wheels.

### Wrongs:

- Don't carry passengers or lift people unless the forklift has been rigged with approved man-lifting devices.
- Don't load the forklift beyond its rated capacity.
- Don't carry a load that is so high it can cause the forklift to tip over.
- Don't raise or lower loads while you're moving.
- Don't let anyone walk under the forks.
- Don't travel with forks raised when unloaded.
- Don't reach through the mast.

### Risks:

- You can be injured or killed if the forklift tips over.
- Others can be injured or killed if they walk under the load, trip over the forks, or are hit by forks or improperly loaded materials.

**Don't speed – take your time! Stay on the lookout for pedestrians. Slow down for turns and on wet or slippery surfaces. Stop and blow your horn at crossings, blind corners, or before reversing. Obey all signs and speed limits. Chock and block on grades!**