



Weekly Safety Meeting

Your Safety Is Our Business®

Volume 2, Issue 8

February 22nd, 2015

Loading Dock Safety

Loading docks are busy areas. Trucks, trailers, and forklifts move throughout loading areas. Trailers, dock levelers, and rolling doors can cause pinch points and elevated docks pose a fall hazard. Workers must pay attention to these hazards and focus on safety training, the proper equipment, and strict observation and supervision of work tasks.

Safety starts at the dock approach, so make sure it is in good repair, free from potholes and large cracks. Mark trailer lanes and positions clearly for easy backing, parking, and spotting. Ensure that chocks and dock bumpers are present and in good repair. Ideally, dock bumpers should be made of fire-resistant materials to avoid fires caused by trailer lights. To decrease exposure to diesel exhaust, ensure that trucks do not idle at the dock.

Loading Dock Hazards

- Forklifts overturning;
- Employees being hit by forklifts and other powered trucks;
- Slips, trips, and falls;
- Trailer creep;
- Unsecured loads;
- Debris on floor;
- Chemical splash;
- Material handling injuries (lifting); and
- Unguarded machinery

The typical loading dock opens about 4 feet off of the ground posing a fall hazard. Use safety barriers to mark ramps and drop-offs. These prevent pedestrians and forklift operators from going over the edge. NEVER lean or hang out of a loading dock – you could be crushed by a backing trailer. Do not walk into a trailer while a forklift is loading or unloading – forklifts are harder to maneuver in tight spaces.

Dock levelers or bridges span the space between the dock and the trailer. Trailer locking devices prevent trailer creep or dock walk, which could cause a gap to open between the trailer and the dock. Integrating dock levels and locking devices into signal lights communicates to workers and truckers when it is safe to load and when it is safe to move the trailer. This equipment should be regularly maintained and inspected for safety before each use.

Do not load a trailer unless it is chocked and firmly seated against the dock. Note and adhere to the weight capacity of the leveler or bridge before loading begins. Inspect the trailer floorboards to ensure that they will withstand the load of the materials, the lifting device, and you. Inspect the load itself to make sure that it is secure, that the pallets (if any) are strong enough for the load, and that the load meets the capacity of your lifting equipment.



Making Your Dock Safe

- Do not use equipment unless you are trained and authorized to do so.
- Stay out of the way of moving equipment so you do not become trapped between a forklift and the dock or crushed by a powered gate
- Clean out dock areas periodically to remove accumulated debris.
- Shrink-wrap loose product for transport or storage.
 - It is very important to secure small items that might fall through the overhead guard of a lift truck.
- Ensure that wheel chocks are used on every vehicle at your dock.
- No dock jumping; this can lead to serious ankle, knee and back injuries.
- Use plastic or metal banding to secure product to pallets for transportation or storage.
- Dock approaches should be free from potholes or deteriorated pavement.
- Ensure that dock bumpers are in good repair.
- Dock leveler or dock plate capacity must be adequate for the load weight.
- Check the condition of the trailer floor.
- Check the load limit of the trailer; ensure that it is adequate for the complete load, equipment, and yourself.
- Be alert at all times in loading areas.

Loading dock safety involves everyone - warehouse personnel and truck drivers. Start and end your day safely by exercising caution during loading and unloading. Serious injuries and fatalities while loading and unloading trucks are preventable by following prescribed procedures and the use of proper equipment.

Safety on the dock...Be sure to use those chocks!!!



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