City of Crystal Lake
Department of Public Works
Forklift Policy

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Approved Date:	**4-14-2025**
Approved By:	**M. Magnuson**

Next Required Review Date: **4-14-2027**

PURPOSE

The City of Crystal Lake Public Works Department has established this policy to establish safe work practices intended for the operation of Powered Industrial Trucks (Forklifts), communicating information concerning safe operation of forklifts, and minimize incidents. A forklift is an industrial vehicle used to carry, push, pull, lift or stack material that is powered by an electric motor or an internal combustion engine. The policy was established under Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1910.178 Powered Industrial Trucks, and OSHA Appendix A non-mandatory – Stability of Powered Industrial Trucks.

RESPONSIBILITES

Management Responsibilities:

- Management shall implement all sections of this policy.
- Management is responsible for providing the necessary direction and support to employees to ensure the effective implementation of this policy.
- Management shall ensure that employees safely and correctly operate forklifts by periodically monitoring employees during work duties.
- Management shall ensure employees are trained and evaluated on the specific type of forklift being operated.

- Management shall ensure employees are competent in performing inspections prior to use and utilize the Pre-Operation Inspection Form.
- Management will make certain proper maintenance, according to the manufacturers' recommendations, is performed on the forklift and any hazards identified are corrected.

Employee Responsibilities:

- Employees shall follow all applicable portions of this policy while performing work duties.
- Employees shall only operate a forklift with the required safety training and operator certification.
- Employees shall operate forklifts in a safe manner.
- Employees shall inspect forklifts prior to each use and completing the appropriate inspection forms as required.
- Employees shall report equipment defects and/or maintenance needs to their supervisors immediately.

PRE-OPERATION INSPECTIONS

Prior to operating a forklift, a pre-operation inspection must be conducted. The operator of the forklift will complete a pre-operation inspection. Results of this inspection are documented on the Operator's Daily Checklist (***See Appendix A***).

The results of the inspection are required to be submitted to the designated storage clipboard. The pre-operation inspection records shall be scanned into the file once submitted to ensure documentation is available to verify inspections are occurring as required.

If any unsafe conditions exist:

1. Operators must immediately report any unsafe forklift conditions to their supervisor, or the on-call fleet tech who will notify the supervisor.
2. The forklift shall be removed from service. The operator must remove the key from the forklift. A sign/steering wheel cover will be placed on the forklift to notify staff the forklift is out of service and is not to be operated.
3. The supervisor is then responsible for ensuring the necessary arrangements are made for repair. Repairs must be made by authorized personnel only.

SAFE WORK OPERATIONS

Operations

- When leaving the forklift unattended, it should always be parked on a flat level surface. The forks will be fully lowered, the controls placed in neutral, the power shut off, the brakes set and the key or connector plug removed.
    - **Note: A forklift is considered unattended when the operator is 25 feet or more away from the vehicle which remains in their view or whenever the operator leaves the vehicle and the forklift is not in view.**

- When the operator of a forklift is dismounted and within 25 ft. of the unit still within view, the load engaging means shall be fully lowered, controls neutralized, and the brakes set to prevent movement.

- Forklifts will not be used to open or close freight doors.

- The brakes of forklifts and trailers will be set to prevent movement during loading or unloading operations.

- An overhead guard will be used as protection against falling objects.

    - **Note: The overhead guard is intended to offer protection from the impact of small packages, boxes or bagged materials only.**

- A load backrest extension will be used whenever necessary to minimize the possibility of the load or part of the load from falling backwards.

- Fire doors, access to stairways, fire extinguishers and emergency exits will always be kept clear.

- Forklifts will not be driven up to anyone standing in front of a bench or other fixed object.

- No person will be allowed to stand or pass under the elevated portion of any forklift, whether loaded or empty.

- Passengers are not permitted to ride on forklifts.

- The operator will always look in the direction of travel and keep a clear view of the path of travel.

- The operator will never place their arms or legs between the uprights of the mast or outside the running lines of the forklift.

- The operator will never push one load with another load.

- Spinner knobs must not be attached to the steering hand wheels of forklifts not originally equipped with such knobs.

- Never lift people on the forks of a forklift. If the forklift is equipped with vertical controls only, or vertical and horizontal controls elevatable with the lifting carriage or forks, means will be provided whereby personnel on the platform can shut off power to the forklift. Protection from falling objects as indicated necessary by the operating conditions will also be provided.

- Safety platforms, firmly secured to the lifting carriage and/or forks, shall be used.

- The operator shall not smoke, eat, and/or drink beverages during operation of any forklift.

Traveling

- A safe distance of approximately three truck lengths from the truck ahead will be maintained whenever possible.
- The operator will slow down and sound the horn at intersections and other locations where vision is obstructed.
- If the load being carried obstructs forward view, the operator will travel in reverse with the load trailing. Utilize a spotter whenever practical.
- Grades will be ascended or descended slowly. When ascending or descending grades in excess of 10 percent, loaded forklifts will be driven with the load upgrade. Unloaded forklifts will be operated on all grades with the load engaging means downgrade. On all grades, the load and load engaging means will be tilted back and raised only as far as necessary to clear the road surface.
- The operator will slow down for wet and slippery surfaces.
- When making turns, the operator will reduce the forklift's speed to a safe level by means of turning the hand steering wheel in a smooth, sweeping motion. Except when maneuvering at a very low speed, the hand steering wheel shall be turned at a moderate, even rate.
- Other fork lifts traveling in the same direction or at intersections, blind spots or other dangerous locations will not be passed.
- Horseplay and stunt driving, including spinning of the tires, is not permitted.
- Running over loose objects in aisle ways will be avoided.
- Under all travel conditions, the forklift will be operated at a speed that will permit the unit to be brought to a stop in a safe manner.

Loading/Stacking

- Only stable and safely arranged loads will be handled. Use extreme caution when handling off-centered loads that cannot be centered on the forks.
- Only loads within the rated capacity of the fork lift will be handled.
- The forks will be placed under the load as far as possible and the mast carefully titled backward to stabilize the load.
- Care will be used when tilting the load forward or backward especially when high tiering. Tilting forward with load engaging means elevated shall be prohibited except to pick up a load. An elevated load will not be tilted forward except when the load is in a deposit position over a rack or stack of material.
- When stacking or tiering loads, the operator will tilt the load backward only enough to stabilize the load.

- The operator will immediately remove unsafe containers and pallets from service.

- Forklifts equipped with attachments will be operated as a partially loaded unit when not handling a load.

- The operator will adjust long and high loads, including multiple-tiered loads that may affect the capacity of the forklift.

- The operator will ensure there is always a safe distance between the mast and overhead doors, wires, lights, pipes and sprinkler systems.

Truck Maintenance:

- Spillage of excess oil or fuel will be carefully cleaned up and disposed of in accordance with State and Federal regulations. Appropriate authorities will be notified if required by law. Fuel cap must be replaced before restarting the engine.

- The operator shall wear the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when replacing an LPG tank or performing any other maintenance on the forklift.

- No forklift will be operated with a leak in the fuel system or any inferior operational issue until it has been properly repaired.

- Open flames will not be used to check the electrolyte level in batteries.

- Smoking is not allowed while changing LPG tanks, refueling gas powered forklifts.

- When the temperature of any part of any forklift is found to be in excess its normal operating temperature, the vehicle must be removed from service and not returned to service until the cause for the overheating has been eliminated.

- Any vehicle that emits hazardous sparks, flames or smoke from the exhaust system will be removed from service and not returned to service until the cause for the hazardous emissions has been corrected.

- Forklift units are to be kept in a clean condition and free of excess lint, oil, and grease. Only noncombustible agents should be used for cleaning trucks. Cleaning trucks with low flash point solvents (below 100 degrees Fahrenheit) is not permitted.

- Precautions regarding toxicity, ventilation, personal protective equipment and fire hazards are to be followed as stated on the warning label and/or the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for that particular cleaning agent.

- Parts used in any forklift unit requiring replacement will be replaced only with parts equal in safety to those parts originally provided by the manufacturer.

TRAINING

Upon initial hiring employees shall be trained in the safe operation of a forklift as required by 1910.178. This training will be conducted prior to any forklift operation.

The City's forklift training program will be implemented with the following requirements:

- Only employees who have successfully completed training in accordance with 1910.178(l) will be permitted to operate a City owned forklift.
- All operator training and evaluation conducted shall be by persons who have the knowledge, training, and experience to train forklift operators and evaluate their competence.
- The employees training shall consist of a combination of formal instruction, practical training (demonstrations performed by the trainer and practical exercises performed by the trainee), and evaluation of the operator's performance in the workplace.
- An evaluation of each operator's performance will be conducted at least once every three years. See ***Attachment B*** for the forklift operator evaluation form.
- Refresher training will be implemented once every three years, and when certain conditions in accordance with 1910.178(l).

Forklift training must include the following topics:

- Safe Operation Instructions
- Differences between forklifts and automobiles
- Controls and instrumentation
- Inspection
- Engine or motor operation
- Steering and maneuvering
- Visibility
- Fork attachment: use and limitations
- Vehicle capacity
- Vehicle stability
- Refueling and/or recharging
- Operating limitations
- Surface conditions
- Loading and unloading
- Pedestrian traffic
- Hazardous locations in which the equipment will be operated
- Ramps and sloped surfaces
- Any unique or potentially hazardous conditions that could affect safe operation
- Any other operating instructions, warnings, or precautions listed in the operator's manual for the type of vehicle that the employee is being trained to operate

The City shall certify that each operator has been trained and evaluated. The certification shall include the name of the operator, the date of the training, the date of the evaluation, and the identity of the person(s) performing the training or evaluation. See ***Attachment C*** for an example forklift safety training certification.

Refresher training in relevant topics will be provided to the operator when:

- The operator has been observed to operate the equipment in an unsafe manner.
- The operator has been involved in an accident or a near miss incident.
- The operator has received an evaluation that reveals that the operator is not operating the truck safely.
- The operator is assigned to drive a different type of forklift.
- Conditions change in the workplace which could affect the safe operation of the forklift.

POLICY REVIEW

The City of Public Works Department will review the Forklift Policy on a 2-year cycle, and update the policy as needed.

APPENDIX A
Operator's Daily Checklist

FITZGERALD EQUIPMENT

Gas/LP-Gas/Diesel Truck Operator's Daily Checklist

Record of Fluid Added

Date _____ Operator _____ Fuel _____

Truck Number _____ Model Number GLP050MX Engine Oil _____

Department _____ Serial Number A390V13520U Radiator Coolant _____

Shift _____ Hour Meter Reading _____ Hydraulic Oil _____

SAFETY AND OPERATIONAL CHECKS (Prior to each shift) Have a **qualified** mechanic correct all problems.

	O.K. (X)	Need Maintenance
Fuel Odor Present?	**Do not start truck Report to your supervisor immediately.**	
Leaks - Fuel, Hydraulic Oil, Engine Oil, or Radiator Coolant		
Tires - Condition and Pressure		
Forks, Top Clip Retaining Pin and Heel - Condition		
Load Backrest Extension -Attached		
Hydraulic Hoses, Mast Chains and Stops - Check Visually		
Finger Guards -Attached		
Overhead Guard - Attached		
Propane Tank (LP Gas Trucks) - Rust, Corrosion, Damage		
Safety Warnings - Attached (Refer to Parts Manual For Location)		
Engine Compartment: Battery - Water/Electrolyte Level and Charge		
Hydraulic Tank Fluid Level - Dipstick		
Transmission Fluid Level - Dipstick		
Engine Oil Level - Dipstick		
All Engine Belts - Functioning Smoothly		
Engine Air Cleaner - (Squeeze Rubber Dirt or Check the Restriction Alarm, If Equipped)		
Fuel Sedimentor (Diesel)		
Radiator Coolant Level (Recovery Bottle)		
Operator's Compartment: Operator's Manual In Container		
Capacity Plate Attached - Information Matches Model, Serial Number, and Attachments		
Hood Latch -Adjust and Fasten		
Seat Belt, Buckle and Retractors - Functioning Smoothly		
Brake Fluid - Check Level		
Controls (Turn Truck On) Unusual Noises Must Be Investigated Immediately: Accelerator Linkage - Functioning Smoothly		
Parking Brake - Functioning Smoothly		
Service Brake - Functioning Smoothly		
Steering operation - Functioning Smoothly		
Drive Control - Forward/Reverse - Functioning Smoothly		
Tilt Control - Forward and Back - Functioning Smoothly		
Hoist and Lowering Control - Functioning Smoothly		
Attachment Control - Operation		
Horn - Functioning		
Lights - Functioning		
Cab, If Equipped - Heater, Defroster, Wipers - Functioning		
Gauges: Ammeter - Operating		
Engine Oil Pressure - Functioning		
Hour Meter - Functioning		
Fuel Level - Functioning		
Temperature - Functioning		
Instrument Monitors - Functioning		

Operator's Daily Checklist

APPENDIX B
Forklift Operator Evaluation Form

FORKLIFT OPERATOR EVALUATION

Operator Name:					**Date:**		
Employer:					**Previous Evaluation Date**		
Trainer Name							
Forklift Class	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V	Class VI	Class VII

Circle "Yes" if Acceptable, "No" if Not Acceptable, or "N/A" if Not Applicable

	Inspections	Comments	Yes	No	N/A
	Conducts pre-shift inspections per operating manual.				
	Can identify and describe the data plate info including lift capacity, load center, maximum vertical height.				
	Operator wore appropriate PPE based on department policy.				
	The seatbelt was worn appropriately.				
	Picking Up and Traveling with the Load				
	Operator used forklift controls appropriately.				
	The forks were placed under the load as far as possible.				
	The load was picked up smoothly.				
	The operator looked before backing.				
	The load/forks were maintained at an appropriate height when traveling.				
	The operator maintained a clear view and clearances from objects and pedestrians.				
	Operated at a reasonable speed.				
	The operator looked in the direction of travel.				
	The operator used the horn where appropriate.				
	The operator yielded to pedestrians and other vehicles.				
	The operator parked the forklift with the fork-tips to the ground.				
	Parking brake was set and controls were placed in neutral.				
	Mounting and dismounting using the 3-point contact rule.				
	Loading and Unloading				
	The load was leveled and placed securely .				
	The load was not dragged or bumped.				
	The operator looked and backed away from the load safely.				
	Safety Platform Use				
	The platform was secured and used per manufacturer requirements.				
	The operator stayed at the controls.				
	No horizontal movement.				
	Fueling				
	Appropriate PPE worn.				
	Fuel connections inspected and secure.				

I certify that the above information is correct and accurate.

EVALUATOR/TRAINER'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

APPENDIX C
Example Forklift Safety Training Certification



CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

This certifies that *NAME*
has successfully completed the required training and evaluation for

Forklift Safety Training

MM/DD/YYYY

and is hereby certified to operate a **Class IV** Powered Industrial Truck (Forklift)

City of Crystal Lake
100 W. Woodstock Street
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Trainer Name

Trainer Signature

EXAMPLE