

TOOLBOX TALK: FORKLIFTS AND TELEHANDLERS

Job or site _____

Date _____

Led by _____

Open with this

Somebody read me the rated capacity off the machine. It has to be posted where the operator can see it. If you cannot find it, that is today's first problem.

The talk

The rated capacity has to be posted on the machine, clearly visible to the operator. If counterweights can be removed, the capacity with them off has to be marked too.

That number is not one number. On a telehandler it is a chart, and the weight it can hold drops fast as the boom goes out. The same load that is fine at ten feet will put the machine on its nose at thirty.

Tipping forward is what happens when the load goes out too far. Tipping sideways is what happens on a slope or in a turn, and it happens faster because there is nothing counterweighting it.

Nobody rides on the forks and nobody rides on the load. If people have to be lifted, that is a different machine or a purpose built platform that is secured to the carriage, and it is a different conversation than this one.

Scissor points on a loader will take a hand off. They are guarded where they are a hazard in normal operation, and if the guard is missing the machine does not run.

Seat belts are on this equipment for rollover. In a rollover the instinct is to jump, and jumping is how operators end up underneath the cab they would have survived inside.

Point at these before anybody starts

- The rated capacity plate. Find it and read the number out loud.
- The load chart in the cab, and the boom angle it is talking about.
- The ground where the machine will set the load down, and whether it is level.
- The forks, and whether the load is against the backrest or hanging off the tips.
- The scissor points on the loader, and whether the guard is still there.
- The seat belt in that cab, and whether it is fastened behind the operator.

The rules that apply

- Lift trucks, stackers and similar equipment must have the rated capacity clearly posted so the operator can see it, including capacity with auxiliary removable counterweights taken off.
- Seat belts must be provided on equipment covered by this section, with the narrow exceptions for standup only machines and machines with no rollover protection or canopy.
- A tractor keeps its seat belt requirement even when a backhoe, breaker or similar attachment is fitted to it.
- Scissor points on front-end loaders that are a hazard to the operator during normal operation must be guarded.
- Rollover protective structures and overhead protection are required as set out in subpart W of Part 1926.
- Bidirectional machines must have a working horn distinguishable from the surrounding noise, and equipment with an obstructed rear view is not reversed without a working reverse alarm or someone signaling it is safe.

Ask the crew

- What is the capacity of that machine at full extension, not at rest?
- Where does the load go if the machine starts to tip forward?
- Who is allowed to ride on the forks?

Close with this

Read the chart, not the machine. The machine will lift things it cannot hold.

Attendance

Everybody who was present signs, including subcontractors and anybody visiting the site.

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This talk is general safety information for a crew briefing, not legal advice and not a substitute for the training your employees are required to have. Standards are quoted for orientation only. Check the current text of the standard and your own state plan, which may be stricter than the federal rule.