

FACT SHEET 25

Speed and fork lift trucks

Excessive speed contributes to a significant number of fork lift truck accidents, increases the likelihood of an accident and the severity of injuries.

The maximum speed of a forklift operating in your specific environment should be based on a thorough risk assessment, including but not limited to, traffic routes, driving surfaces, load types, segregation of pedestrians, lighting, weather conditions.

When driven at an excessive speed for the conditions, fork lifts may become unstable, may lose a load, impact fixtures and fitting and worse a pedestrian. There are many examples of fork lifts tipping over as a result of operating at excessive speed. An unladen fork lift is less stable than a laden one.

Sites should have mandatory speed limits (these may vary depending on different parts of the site) and speed limits should be managed and enforced by managers and supervisors.

There are systems available that can physically control the speed of fork lift trucks. Some systems will allow different maximum speeds to be established in different zones. Your fork lift truck service provider, or supplier, should be able to help further with this.

The information in this Fact Sheet has been assembled and interpreted to give truck owners and users basic guidance on frequently asked questions. Further important information will be given in the quoted reference documents. Responsibility for meeting the safety obligations discussed rests with the employer, and the FLTA will not accept liability for any problem arising as a result of the content of this document. Technical Bulletins, containing more detailed information and updated as appropriate, are made available free to members of the FLTA SAFE USER GROUP.

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