## 1.0 Policy

All forklifts (powered industrial equipment) shall be operated, maintained, and controlled in a safe manner.

## 2.0 Purpose

To define the procedures and standards that apply to the care, control, maintenance, inspection, and operation of forklifts (powered industrial equipment).

## 3.0 Scope

All Sunbelt Controls work sites requiring the use of forklifts (powered industrial equipment).

## 4.0 Definitions

**Forklift** means a mobile, power-propelled truck used to carry, push, pull, lift, stack, or tier materials. Powered industrial trucks (forklifts) are also commonly known as pallet trucks, rider trucks, fork trucks, or lift trucks.

## 5.0 Requirements

### 5.1 Training

Only trained and authorized persons are permitted to operate a forklift. No employee is allowed to operate a forklift without the proper training. A sample-training outline is included in Appendix 21-A. The following requirements shall be met to become a "Qualified Forklift Operator":

Training shall only be performed by authorized employees as designated by the Safety Department for their skills and competency.

- Complete the educational requirement as stated above via formal training (i.e. formal instructions, practical training and operator evaluation).
- Perform the demonstrated capability requirement satisfactorily. Each trainee, who satisfactorily completes the qualifications as outlined above, shall be issued a written document as evidence of being a Qualified Forklift Operator.

**Refresher Training**

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

- The operator has been observed to operate the vehicle in an unsafe manner;
- The operator has been involved in an accident or 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 truck; or
- A condition in the workplace changes in a manner that could affect safe operation of the truck.

**Evaluations:**

An evaluation of each powered industrial truck operator's performance shall be conducted at least once every three years.

### 5.2 Inspection and Maintenance

Each forklift truck operator shall inspect their vehicle at the start of each shift and document this inspection on the Sunbelt Controls Daily Forklift Inspection Form (reference Appendix 21-B). Any noted condition that affects the safe operation of the lift truck shall be reported to the operator's supervisor for corrective action and shall keep the lift truck from being operated until the unsafe condition is corrected.

Forklifts that are defective, in need of repair or are unsafe shall be tagged ***"Danger - Do Not Operate"*** and taken out of service until restored to safe operating condition.

A maintenance log shall be kept on each forklift to determine when required maintenance is due. Only qualified personnel shall perform maintenance and repair.

### 5.3 General

Stunt driving and horseplay shall not be permitted.

All forklifts shall be equipped with seat belts and utilized by the operator when in use.

Personnel are not permitted to ride on forklifts except in designated seats that are part of the equipment design.

All forklifts shall be equipped with a fire extinguisher (type ABC).

Under all travel condition the forklift shall be operated at a speed that will permit it to be brought to a stop in a safe manner. All traffic regulations shall be observed, including authorized work site speed limits. A safe distance shall be maintained approximately three forklift lengths from the forklift truck ahead. The driver shall be required to slow down and sound the horn at cross aisles and other areas where vision is obstructed. If the load being carried obstructs forward view, the driver shall be required to travel with the load trailing. The driver shall be required to look in the direction of, and keep a clear view of the path of travel. When going uphill with the load obstructing the drivers view, a spotter should be used. When going downhill with a load, the driver should travel with the load facing uphill.

Forklifts shall have a functional horn and back-up alarm with a distinctive sound, loud enough to be heard clearly above background noises. There are other scenarios where a flashing yellow/amber light would be installed. An Addendum referencing any requirements of such lights shall be added to this manual section.

Copies of the manufacturer's operating instructions for each type of forklift shall be readily available for review by operators and supervisory personnel.

Lift trucks, stackers, etc., shall have the rated capacity clearly posted on the vehicle so as to be clearly visible to the operator. When the manufacturer provides auxiliary removable counterweights, corresponding alternate rated capacities also shall be clearly shown on the vehicle. These ratings shall not be exceeded.

No modifications or additions, which affect the capacity or safe operation of the equipment, shall be made without the manufacturer's written approval. If such modifications or changes are made, the capacity, operation, and maintenance instruction plates, tags, or decals shall be changed accordingly. In no case shall the original safety factor of the equipment be reduced.

If a load is lifted by two or more forklifts working in unison, the total load carried by all shall not exceed their total combined capacity. This would be considered a non-routine task. Therefore, a JSA is recommended (reference JSAs in Safety Systems, Section Nine [9] of this manual). Steering or spinner knobs shall not be attached to the steering wheel unless the steering mechanism is of a type that prevents road reactions from causing the steering hand wheel to spin. The steering knob shall be mounted within the periphery of the wheel.

All forklifts shall have the manufacturer's nameplate showing its weight with attachments, lifting capacity, lift height maximum and other pertinent data. Nameplates or markings shall be maintained in a legible condition and remain in place at all times.

Railroad tracks shall be crossed diagonally wherever possible. Parking closer than 8 feet from the center of railroad tracks is prohibited. Grades shall be ascended or descended slowly. When ascending or descending grades in excess of 10 percent loaded forklifts shall be driven with the load upgrade. Unloaded forklifts should be operated on all grades with the load engaging means downgrade. On all grades, the load and load engaging means shall be tilted back if applicable and raised only as far as necessary tee clear the road surface.

No person shall be allowed to stand or pass under the elevated portion of any forklift, whether loaded or empty. There shall be sufficient headroom under overhead installations, lights, pipes, sprinkler system, etc.

Arms or legs are prohibited from being placed between the uprights of the mast or outside the running lines of the forklift.

When a forklift is left unattended, load engaging means shall be fully lowered, controls shall be neutralized, power shall be shut off, and brakes set. Wheels shall be blocked if parked on an incline.

A safe distance shall be maintained from the edge of ramps or platforms while on any elevated dock, or platform, or freight car. Forklifts shall not be used for opening or closing freight doors.

Brakes shall be set and wheel blocks shall be in place to prevent movement of trucks, trailers, or railroad cars while loading or unloading. Fixed jacks may be necessary to support a semi-trailer during loading or unloading when the trailer is not coupled to a tractor. Prior to forklift entry, the flooring and frames of trucks, trailers and railroad cars shall be checked for breaks and weakness before they are driven into and to determine if it will bare the intended weight of the forklift and intended load.

Dock board or bridge plates shall be properly secured before they are driven over. Dock board or bridge plates shall be driven over carefully and slowly and their rated capacity never exceeded. Portable dock boards shall be secured in position, by being anchored or equipped with devices that will prevent their slipping.

An overhead guard shall be used as protection against falling objects. It should be noted that an overhead guard is intended to offer protection from the impact of small packages, boxes, and bagged material, etc. representative of the job application, but not to withstand the impact of a falling capacity load. Additional counter weighting of forklifts shall not be allowed unless approved by the manufacturer.

### 5.4 Refueling and Battery Changing/Charging

Refueling and battery charging operations shall be performed only in designated areas. Open flames, smoking, sparks, or electric arcs shall be eliminated from refueling (reference Fire Protection, Section [20] for general fire safety) and battery changing/charging areas (reference Electrical-General under section fourteen [14] of this manual for battery safety).

All forklifts shall be properly positioned and brakes applied before attempting to refuel or change/charge battery.

## 6.0 REFERENCES

OSHA 29 CFR 1910.178 (Powered Industrial Trucks)
OSHA 29 CFR 1926.602 (c) (Lifting and Hauling Equipment)