

POWERED INDUSTRIAL TRUCK (FORKLIFT) SAFETY PROGRAM





Prepared by: Melonee Cruse

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Program Description

This written Powered Industrial Truck (PIT) Safety Program establishes guidelines to be followed whenever any University employees work with powered industrial trucks

(Forklifts) at this campus. The guidelines established are to be followed to:

- Provide a safe working environment,
- Govern operator use of powered industrial trucks, and
- Ensure proper care and maintenance of powered industrial trucks.

It is the intent of the University to comply with the requirements of Cal/OSHA Title 8, §3650 Industrial Trucks. These regulations have requirements for PIT operations, including those for battery care and charging.

Scope and Application

The procedures here establish uniform requirements designed to ensure that PIT safety training, operation, and maintenance practices are communicated to and understood by all affected employees. These requirements also are designed to ensure that procedures are in place to safeguard the health and safety of all persons on campus including faculty, staff, students, and visitors.

All PIT equipment used for material handling is covered under this program, including sit-down type forklifts, stand-up forklifts, straddle trucks, narrow isle lift trucks, walk behind forklifts, pallet jacks, etc. The Powered Industrial Truck Safety Program guidelines apply to University/Department owned powered industrial trucks, as well as all trucks rented, leased, or borrowed on a temporary basis and used by university personnel.

Roles and Responsibilities

All Cal Poly Staff, Faculty, and Eligible Students

- All Cal Poly faculty, staff, and students required to or requesting to operate Forklifts/PITS, or responsible for overseeing their operation, must be familiar with the requirements of this program.
- All operators must complete training on the safe operation of PITs and obtain a 3-year certification specific to the equipment type.

Departments That Own/Use Forklifts/PITs

Departments owning, operating, or permitting the use of Forklifts/PITs must:

- Ensure all faculty, staff, or student operators have current training and evaluations as per this program.
- Designate a Department Safety Coordinator (DSC) or other responsible person to oversee program implementation.

Responsibilities include:

• Verify selection and purchase/rental equipment suitable for job tasks based on hazard analysis.

- Verify personnel are trained to operate their specific equipment type.
- Verify safety inspections and preventive maintenance is documented.
- Verify operators adhere to safe work practices while using powered industrial equipment.
- Ensure adequate resources are available to repair trucks.
- Verify contractors/vendors to operate Forklifts/PITs on department premises, ensuring they are properly trained if using department-owned equipment.
- Conducts periodic observations to assure operator compliance and program is being properly implemented.

Supervisor or Manager of Forklifts/PIT Operators

Supervisors or managers must:

- Communicate program requirements to equipment operators.
- Assign and verify completion of operator training and evaluations.
- Verify operators document site safety and equipment inspections.
- Ensure unsafe/inoperable equipment is tagged and removed from service.
- Confirm purchased/rented equipment suits work environment and job task hazards.
- Submit training records to LMS for recordkeeping.
- Conduct periodic observations to ensure operator compliance and proper program implementation.

Forklift/PIT Equipment Operators

Operators are required to:

- Complete the EHS online training course and undergo evaluation by a qualified trainer or supervisor.
- Perform daily vehicle inspections.
- Report inoperable, damaged, or impaired vehicles to supervisors.
- Avoid operating unsafe equipment.
- Comply with safety practices outlined in this program.

Contractors/Vendors Using Forklifts/PITs on Cal Poly Property

- Contractors/vendors trained under their company's Forklift/PIT safety program may operate their own equipment on Cal Poly premises with departmental permission.
- Operators may be asked to provide verification of training for, and inspection of, the specific equipment they are using.
- Work must stop immediately if untrained contractor/vendor employees are identified until properly trained personnel are available.

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) – Forklfit/PIT Safety Program Manager

The EHS Program Manager oversees all aspects of the program, including:

- Periodic program revisions to maintain compliance with evolving regulations.
- Communicating program updates and requirements to affected departments.
- Developing and updating training materials to align with Cal/OSHA regulations.
- Assisting departments with unique or department-specific training needs.
- Identifying safe locations for hands-on training and evaluations.
- Provides technical guidance for high risk and infrequently performed tasks as requested
- Conducting program audits to ensure proper implementation.
- Verify department inventory
- Providing customer support and collaborating on program improvements as needed.
- Review this program annually or when new regulatory requirements or standards are implemented.

Program Technical Information

Types of Powered Industrial Trucks (Forklifts).

Class	Туре	lma	age
I	Electric Motor Rider Types include stand up or sit down. Some with pneumatics.	Stand-up	Sit-down
II	Electric Motor Narrow Aisle Trucks. Types include high lift straddle, order picker, side loader platform, sidelift, turret trucks, and low lift platform.	High Lift Staddle	Turret Truck
III	Electric Motor hand truck or hand/rider trucks. Types include low lift platform walkie pallet tractors, low lift walkie/central control, reach type outriggers, high lift straddle platform and slide.	High Lift Platform	Low Lift Walkie Pallet
IV	Internal combustion engine trucks (solid/cushion tires)	Counterbalanced (cushion	ed tire
V	Internal combustion engine trucks (pneumatic tires)	Counterbalanced (pneuma tire)	tic

VI	Electric and Internal combustion engine tractors	Sit down rider (with draw bar pull over 999 lbs.).	
VII	Rough Terrain Forklift Trucks. Used on unimproved natural terrain and disturbed construction sites. Types include vertical mass, variable reach, and truck/trailer mounted	Vertical Mast	Truck/trailer mounted

Source: Powered Industrial Trucks - Types - Forklift Classifications

Program Requirements and Procedures

Program Elements

A. Inspection

- 1) A pre-use inspection of the PIT must be performed by the operator before each use (See Appendix A FORKLIFT INSPECTION CHECKLIST)
- 2) The inspection has two components: the "Visual Checks," and the "Operational Checks"
- 3) The visual check should include, at minimum, the inspection of the frame, forks, carriage, tires, overhead guard, hydraulic hoses, chains, safety equipment, safety decals, and overall appearance.
- 4) Operators should perform operational checks that include ensuring the horn, lights, audible warning, brakes, control levers, steering, and safety equipment are fully functional and in good condition.

B. Safe Forklift Operations

- 1) Only employees who are trained in the safe operation of forklifts are permitted to use the forklift.
- 2) Always operate the PIT according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- 3) Always wear seatbelts if available
- 4) Never place any part of the body outside the running lines of the forklift or between mast uprights
- 5) Never allow others to stand, pass, or work under the elevated portion of the forklift
- 6) Riders are not permitted on vehicles.
- 7) Always keep a safe speed and distance while driving,
- 8) Never exceed the rated load and ensure it is stable and balanced.
- 9) Always keep checking for obstacles or pedestrians
- 10)Operators must be able to look in the direction of travel. If load is obstructing view, operators must travel in the reverse direction. Always "cradle the load"
- 11)Sound horn at blind spots, intersections, and while backing, to alert pedestrians

- 12) Ascend or descend a grade slowly with the load upgrade.
- 13) Turn engine off, lower forks, set brakes and remove key when operator is away from forklift.
- 14)Do not operate on floors, sidewalks, platforms, or elevators that will not safely support loaded vehicle.

C. Load Handling

- 1) Take special precaution when securing and handling loads.
- 2) Know truck load capacity.
- 3) Make sure load is secured on pallet.
- 4) During transport, carry load 6-8 inches off the ground.
- 5) Take extreme care when tilting loads.
- 6) Always slow down and ensure load is lowered when turning corners.

D. Forklift Maintenance

- 1) Remove from service any forklift found to be in unsafe operating condition.
- 2) Keep forklift in clean conditions, free of excess oil and grease
- 3) Contact Fleet Services when repairs are due. Do not miss scheduled maintenance dates.
- E. Emergency: Tip Over

In case vehicle starts to tip-over:

- 1). HOLD TIGHT TO STEERING WHEEL
- 2). BRACE FEET AND KEEP YOUR SEATBELT ON.
- 3). LEAN AWAY FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE FALL
- 4). NEVER JUMP OUT OF THE FORKLIFT.

Equipment Requirements

- All powered industrial trucks used by Cal Poly employees are required to meet the design and construction requirements for powered industrial trucks established in the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standard for Powered Industrial Trucks, Part II, ANSI B56.1, except for vehicles intended primarily for earth moving or over-the-road hauling. Approved trucks are required to bear a label or some other identifying mark indicating approval by the testing laboratory.
- Nameplates and markings must be in place, must not be covered over with paint which may obscure the identification information, and the nameplates must be maintained in a legible condition.
- Modifications and additions which affect capacity and safe operation without the manufacturer's prior written approval are prohibited. Capacity, operation, and maintenance instruction plates, tags, or decals should be modified accordingly.
- Power-operated industrial trucks shall not be used in atmospheres containing hazardous concentrations of dust or where flammable gases or vapors are, or may be, present in quantities sufficient to produce explosive or ignitable mixtures. If the location is believed to be hazardous or contain any hazardous materials, EHS should be consulted in advance.
- High lift rider trucks must be equipped with an overhead guard, unless operating conditions do not permit the use of the guard. The overhead

guard is intended to offer protection from the impact of small packages, boxes, bagged material, etc., but not to withstand the impact of a falling capacity load.

 All Cal Poly Forklifts must be registered with the Cal Poly Fleet Department.

Program Training

All Cal Poly forklift operators must complete the online EHS Forklift Safety training every three (3) years and successfully pass a hands-on driving evaluation. Training must include both INSTRUCTIONAL and HANDS-ON components, followed by PRACTICAL EVALUATION. Hands-on training must be conducted by a knowledgeable and experienced supervisor, staff member or an EHS approved vendor.

Training Options:

Option 1: Online Training + In-House Evaluation

To initiate this option, supervisors must assign training via a Learning Hub ticket request. The request must include:

- Employee's first and last name
- Employee's email address
- Title of the training: CALPOLY-CURRIC-EHS-FORK-LIFT-SAFETY

Learning Hub training request link - https://afd.calpoly.edu/ehs/training

Once assigned, the system will automatically remind employees when recertification is due.

Online Training Modules (Instructional)

- 1. Safety inspection and Maintenance
- 2. Stability and capacity
- 3. Load Handling
- 4. Traveling and maneuvering

After completing the online modules, employees must receive hands-on training from a supervisor or staff member familiar with the specific forklift the trainee will use.

Evaluation

Once trained, the employee must be evaluated by a qualified in-house evaluator or an EHS-approved vendor. If no in-house evaluator is available, EHS recommends Central Coast Safety Training, which can conduct evaluations on campus. Contact EHS for details.

information.

Option 2 - Off-site Vendor Training

Forklift/PIT training is also available through local vendors. These vendors will provide both instructional training and a practical evaluation. Central Coast Safety Training offers the best price for on-site training if the minimum participant requirements are met.

Cal Poly does not require additional training beyond vendor certification but does require recertification every three years.

Approved Forklift Safety training vendors (as of September 2025).

Departments are responsible for contacting the vendor and arranging payment, training dates and times.

1. Central Coast Safety Training – Alan Reitz

<u>www.centralcoastsafetytraining.com</u>, Phone Number: (805) 680-1094, email: alan.reitz@aol.com

- 2. United Rental Training, San Luis Obispo www.unitedrentals.com, 635 Tank Farm Road, San Luis Obipso (805) 543-7297.
- 3. HERC Rental www.hercrentals.com Paso Robles, CA (805) 226-9035.

All vendors will conduct on-site training. Contact them for additional information. Minimum attendance is required.

In-House Forklift Evaluation

To qualify as an in-house forklift evaluator, an individual must meet the following criteria:

- Possess a minimum of three (3) years of combined experience, training, and knowledge in operating forklifts.
- Be approved by the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Forklift Safety Program Administrator.

Contact EHS for approval details or further guidance.

Training for Previously Certified Operators or New Employees

Even if an employee has prior forklift training or certification from a previous role or employer, additional training is required when:

- The employee starts a new role in a different department at Cal Poly.
- The employee is new to Cal Poly.

In these cases, the supervisor or manager must provide hands-on training specific to the forklift model and workplace conditions. Additionally, the employee must:

Complete the online EHS Forklift Safety training via the Learning Hub.

Undergo a practical evaluation as outlined in the training options.

Recertification Requirements

To maintain forklift operator certification at Cal Poly, all operators must:

- Complete the EHS Forklift Safety course in the Learning Hub every three (3) years.
- Pass a hands-on evaluation conducted by an EHS-approved supervisor, manager, or external vendor/instructor.

Definitions

Attachment - A device, other than conventional forks or load backrest extensions, mounted permanently or temporarily on the PIT for handling the load.

Counterbalanced Lift Truck – A PIT equipped with load engaging means wherein all the load during normal transporting is outside the area formed by the wheel contacts.

Fork Height - The vertical distance from the floor to the load carrying surface of the forks with mast vertical.

Forklift Truck - A high lift self-loading PIT equipped with a load carriage and forks for transporting and/or stacking loads.

Free Lift Height - The attainable fork height before the stated overall lowered height of the mast is exceeded by any standard part of the forks, mast or carriage assemblies, when loaded.

High-Lift Truck – A PIT equipped with a power-operated lifting device used for the transportation, stacking, and positioning of loads.

Lift - The vertical travel of the carriage with mast vertical

Lift Speed - The average velocity in feet per minute when raising the load carriage throughout its operating range, specified as empty and/or loaded.

Load Backrest Extension - A removable structure extending vertically from the carriage frame to provide increased support and stability for unusually high loads.

Load Center - The point at which the center of load (i.e., center of gravity) is placed ahead of the fork face or equivalent (attachment) with the load resting on the forks.

Maximum Fork Height - The fork height attainable with the mast at the fully elevated position

Overhead Guard - A framework fitted to a PIT over the head of a riding operator.

Powered Industrial Truck – Also known as a PIT, a mobile power-driven truck used for hauling, pushing, or lifting materials where normal work is normally confined within the boundaries of a place of employment.

Rated Capacity - The maximum weight, expressed in pounds, at given load center, that a PIT can safety transport and/or stack to a specified height when equipped with a standard mast, carriage and forks. The rated capacity is based on the strength of the various truck components and the amount of counterweight.

Telescoping Mast - A multiple mast wherein one member is stationary and the other(s) movable vertically with respect to the stationary member and supporting the fork carriage in its vertical movement. This mast permits maximum lifts substantially greater than the overall lowered height.

Tilt - The amount by which the mast structure, forks and carriage may be tipped beyond the vertical position, forward or backward.

Program Evaluation

Managers/Supervisors must conduct quarterly observations of operators. The EHS Program Administrator will conduct annual program audits.

Record Keeping Requirements

- Training Records will be maintained in the LMS recordkeeping system.
- Operator evaluations and certifications will be kept with the department for 3 years.
- All operator observations and program audits will be kept with the department and the EHS office, respectively, for 3 years.

References

Cal/OSHA Title 8, §3650 Industrial Trucks ASME B56.1-1993, Safety Standard for Low Lift and High Lift Trucks

Program History

Issued by: EHS Forklift Program Administrator Melonee Cruse

Next review date: YYYY

Revision	Approval Date	Summary of change
1.0	MM/YYYY	
2.0	MM/YY	

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Forklift Inspection Form

Attachment B – Forklift Hands-On Training Checklist

Attachment C – Forklift Operator Practical Evaluation

Attachment D - Sample Hands-on Practice Course Examples





NA	Date: Shift: CAL POLY ID# POWER ON CHECKS 19) Unit starts & runs properly 20) Instruments/System warning indicators 21) Fuel/Charge level 22) Horn/Audible warning devices 23) Function controls: a) Control markings b) Drive c) Steering d) Braking e) Mast/Boom f) Carriage/Work attachment(s) g) Frame level controls		AR	NA ax
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	f) Carriage/Work attachment(s) g) Frame level controls	ì		i 🗆
	g) Frame level controls			
1 П	h) Accessories/Optional equipment			
_	i) Function-enable (deadman) devices			
	24) Emergency/Auxiliary controls			
	25) Seatbelt/Operator restraint devices			
	26) Other:			
	WORKSITE INSPECTION:	OK	AR	NA
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			_	
		1		
	30) Overhead obstructions	-		
3 0	31) Electrical conductors	1		
	32) Hazardous locations	+		
	34) Ground/Surface & support conditions	+		
	35) Pedestrian/Vehicle traffic	1		
	36) Weather conditions	1		
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Attachment B – Forklift Hands-On Training Checklist



FORKLIFT HANDS-ON TRAINING CHECKLIST

Use the Forklift Operator Hands-On Training as a guide for teaching new operators the essential components of forklift operation in compliance with **Cal/OSHA §3668** standards. Use this checklist to:

- Confirm that all required training elements are covered
- Observe and document the trainee's performance
- Provide feedback and additional instruction as needed
- Ensure the trainee is prepared for final evaluation and certification

If you have any questions or need clarification on any part of the checklist, please contact **Cal Poly EHS** for support.

Observations	Comments
Pre-Operational Inspection	
Performs daily inspection of forklift	
Checks tires, brakes, horn, lights, steering, battery, and lift system	
Knows how to identify and reports any deficiencies	
Ensures fuel system is leak-free	
Verifies load capacity and stability indicators	
Truck Familiarization	
Verifies load capacity and stability indicators	
Can Identify the differences between forklift and automobile	
Locates and explains controls and instrumentation	
Demonstrates knowledge of engine/motor operation	
Understands visibility limitations due to load	
Safe Operation Practices	
Demonstrates proper steering and maneuvering	
Maintains safe speed and control	
Observes traffic rules and safe distances	
Sounds horn at blind spots, crossing aisles and backing up.	
Travels with load trailing when visibility is obstructed	
Looks in direction of travel before moving	
Avoids stunt driving and horseplay	
Does not allow unauthorized riders	
Avoids placing body parts in hazardous areas	

Attachment B – Forklift Hands-On Training Checklist

Load Handling	
Aligns forks properly before lifting	
Ensures personnel are clear of load area	
Lifts and lowers loads smoothly	
Places loads securely and safely	
Backs out carefully after load placement	
Workplace- Specific Training	
Demonstrates awareness of site-specific hazards	
Operates forklift in designated areas only	
Understands procedures for refueling or battery charging	
Responds appropriately to changes in worksite conditions	



Cal Poly Forklift Practical Observation Evaluation

Use this checklist to evaluate forklift operator proficiency and when conducting a periodic evaluation to ensure that operators are continuing to operate forklifts properly. Per Cal/OSHA regulation 3668 and evaluator is someone who has the knowledge, training and experience to train operators and evaluate their competence on the equipment they operate. Cal Poly forklift evaluators are trained per Cal Poly EHS guidelines. Send a copy of the completed evaluation to Melonee Cruse, mecruse@calpoly.edu

Operator Name/ Department:	Evaluator Name:	
Date of Evaluation:	CP Vehicle ID# and Forklift Make/Model:	

OPERATOR BEHAVIORS	Ra	ting			COMMENTS
Pre-use Inspection		-			
Completed daily inspection checklist?	YES	NO			
2. Look for Damage.	YES	NO			
Submitted any deficiencies found in daily inspection to maintenance	YES	NO			
Picking Up The Load					
Square up on the center of the load.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
2. Stop with the fork tips about 1 foot from the load.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NA	
3. Clear personnel from the area near the load.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NA	
4. Level the forks; then slowly drive forward until the load contacts the carriage.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
5. Lift the load carefully and smoothly until it is clear.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
6. Tilt the mast back slightly to stabilize the load.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
7. Look over both shoulders.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
8. After out and stopped, lower the load to travel height.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
Traveling				•	
Do not raise or lower the load and forks while traveling.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	

0.14:4:	COOD	EAID	DOOD	NI/A	
2. Maintain a safe speed.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
3. Observe all traffic rules, warning signs, floor load limits and overhead clearances.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
4. Keep arms and legs inside the forklift.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
5. Follow other vehicles at safe distance.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
6. Slow down when cornering.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
7. Use the horn to alert others.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
8. Travel with the load facing uphill while on a ramp or incline.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
9. Stop smoothly.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
Putting Down A Load					
Make sure there is sufficient clearance for the load.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
2. Clear personnel from the area near the load.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
3. Square up to the location; then stop about 1 foot away.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
4. Raise the load to placement level.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
5. Move slowly forward.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
6. If the load is on a pallet, lower it into position and lower the forks further.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
7. Look over both shoulders before backing out.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
8. Back straight out until the forks have cleared.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
Lower the forks to traveling position.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
Parking					
Fully lower the forks.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
2. Neutralize the controls.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
3. Set the brakes.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
4. Turn off the power.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
5. If parked on an incline, block the wheels.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
6. Park only in authorized areas.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
Fueling And Battery Recharging					
1. Engine off.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	

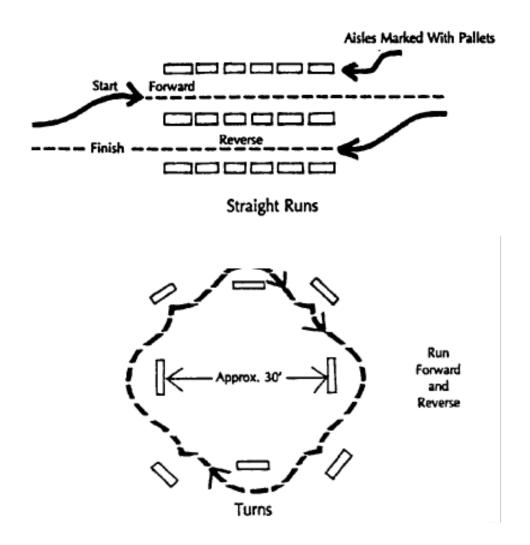
2. Fire extinguisher nearby.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
3. Proper personal protective equipment worn.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
4. Safe fueling and battery recharging procedures followed.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
5. Spills cleaned up immediately.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A	
Hazards specific to operating a forklift at Cal Poly? Instructor to communicate any Cal Poly specific hazards to operator such as uneven surface locations, blind turns.		s, if any	ent spe / in	cific	

	Based on my evaluation, the operator lead qualified to operate the following equi	has successfully completed the evaluation and is pment:
	Comments:	
Evaluati Date:	ator Signature: O	perator Signature:

Please scan and email completed evaluation form to Environmental Health & Safety for completion credit. Learning Management System will notify operators in 3 years of need to requalify. If you have any questions, please contact Melonee Cruse (805) 756-6664

SAMPLE PRACTICE COURSES

Sample practice course for straight runs.



Sample course for serpentine operations.

