



Forklift Training and OSHA (by Mark Hansel, CSP, Cambridge Risk Control)

Based on a question from one of our clients, we recently did some research to answer some simple questions about forklift operator qualifications, forklift trainer qualifications and the OSHA guidelines. Here are the questions:

- "What are the OSHA required qualifications for a forklift trainer?"
- "Is there any requirement that the forklift trainer be re-tested and re-trained periodically?" (No)
- "I took a forklift train-the-trainer class by JJ Keller three years ago. Can I conduct my own train-the-trainer class and certify others?" (Yes)
- "JJ Keller doesn't teach the train-the-trainer class anymore. Do you know of any others that still provide this training?" (Below)

The required qualifications for forklift trainers is given in OSHA standard 1910.178(l)(2)(iii) that says: "All operator training and evaluation shall be conducted by persons who have the knowledge, training, and experience to train powered industrial truck operators and evaluate their competence." – a somewhat vague statement.

They also have an interpretive letter on this issue posted at:

http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=INTERPRETATIONS&p_id=25021

that is equally vague. The essential part of it says: "A trainer must have the 'knowledge, training, and experience' to train others how to safely operate the powered industrial truck in the employer's workplace. In general, the trainer will only have sufficient 'experience' if he has the practical skills and judgment to be able to himself operate the equipment safely under the conditions prevailing in the employer's workplace. For example, if the employer uses certain truck attachments and the trainer has never operated a truck with those attachments, the trainer would not have the experience necessary to train and evaluate others adequately on the safe use of those attachments. However, the standard does not require that the trainers operate a PIT [Powered Industrial Truck] regularly (i.e., outside of their operator training duties) as part of their job function or responsibility."

We called OSHA (our local office) in an attempt to get clarification. The OSHA representative said that the first thing to do would be to call the forklift truck's manufacturer and ask the manufacturer what qualifications the driver's trainer should have and how often re-certification should be done. He said that OSHA would expect that the trainer is an experienced driver and that he/she is certified in writing to do the training. A train-the-trainer class certification would do for documentation. In addition, it would be acceptable for a person who has attended the train-the-trainer class to give others the train-the-trainer training and certify them. So, if you want to, you could train your own forklift trainers and certify them as qualified.

So there is no OSHA requirement for trainers' getting periodic testing or re-training. From a practical point of view, we've always thought that the best forklift trainer would be an articulate and experienced in-house forklift driver. He/she would need to be familiar with the OSHA standard as well as the in-house equipment.

Here are some possible sources for a train-the-trainer class:

1) Your forklift vendor. The company that you have used for purchasing forklifts, forklift parts and/or for servicing probably teaches train-the-trainer classes themselves, or would recommend someone that does.

2) National Lift Truck (Franklin Park, IL) <http://www.nationallifttruck.com/>. They have a "train-the-trainer" class twice per month - on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays.

3) National Safety Council – (the Chicago Chapter, for instance) <http://www.nsc.org/train/chapter/course.cfm?cid=68&id=61>. Upcoming Chicago classes: 5/9/06, 7/11/06, 9/12/06 and 12/12/06

2006 Dates:

January:

Plan Your Safety Training Now!
Call Cambridge For Ideas!
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February:

Child Passenger Safety Week

March:

Poison Prevention Week
Workplace Eye Safety Month
Save Your Vision Month

April:

Sports Eye Safety Month
Intl Building Safety Week
Work Zone Aware. Week
Playground Safety Week

May:

Clean Air Month
Melanoma Awareness Month
Electrical Safety Month
National EMS Week
Poison Prevention Week

June:

National Safety Month

July:

EYE INJURY PREV. MONTH

August:

Prepare Your Winter Safety Training!

September:

Farm Safety/Health Week

October:

Nat. Fire Prevention Week
Drive Safely Work Week
Radon Action Week

November:

Take advantage of the weather and do your classroom training!

December:

"3D Month" - National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month



Warning About Office Chair Dangers

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A new study by an organization devoted to spine health (www.spine-health.com) finds that most office workers' backs feel worse after a day at work, despite efforts by some employers to provide ergonomically friendly office chairs. An online poll by the group found that 70 percent of those surveyed reported their backs felt significantly worse at the end of the day, compared with how they felt before work.

Chiropractor John Triano says the news should come as no surprise. "Sitting adds large amounts of pressure to the back muscles and spinal discs, even more than standing, and often people with desk jobs don't move around much and/or they slouch, causing even more strain on spinal structures."

Using an office chair labeled "ergonomic" is not a solution. Rather, Triano says, what matters is that the chair should be adjustable for height, seat depth, and position of armrests. The chair should be set to the desired height of the work surface, and users should avoid slouching or leaning forward. A chair's lumbar back support should be used to ensure the lower back is aligned against the back of the chair.

Triano emphasizes that even if one sits properly, remaining seated for prolonged periods will often result in fatigue and discomfort. Stand, stretch, or walk at least a few minutes every half hour, he recommends.

North Aurora Illinois OSHA Office Offers Training

OSHA's North Aurora, IL., Area Office is co-sponsoring a series of seminars to help Illinois employers reduce on-the-job injuries and illnesses. Each seminar will focus on a different subject such as recordkeeping, OSHA inspections, accident investigations, forklift safety and hazard communication. The dates are April 12, May 10, June 14 and July 19. Each session will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. at Eigerlab, 605 Fulton Ave., Rockford, Ill. To register, contact Jey Flick at (815) 316-6367, or e-mail jflick@edge-ni.org.

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida OSHA Office Offers Free Construction Based Safety Conference in March

A free conference focusing on safety and health issues for workers involved in construction is scheduled for March 23 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Florida Atlantic University, 1515 West Commercial Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. "Educating South Florida's Work Force," sponsored by OSHA, the Construction Association of South Florida, Florida Atlantic University, and South Florida Chapter of Associated General Contractors, will feature hands-on safety demonstrations, crane simulation, and more. To register, contact Joyce Salamone, Construction Association of South Florida, at (954) 565-5900. Contact is Vergie Bain, compliance assistance specialist, at (954) 424-0242, ext. 19. Also see www.OSHA.gov for additional information.

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Safety training is good...**FREE** safety training is better!

Safety Resource Center

Upcoming Training 1

16th Annual
Construction Safety
Conference &
Exposition

April 4-6, 2006
Rosemont, IL

www.buildsafe.org
Contact Gayla Bockrath -
gbockrath@buildsafe.org

Upcoming Training 2

The Mid-American
Safety, Health &
Environmental
Conference &
Exposition

May 8-12, 2006
Tan Tar A, Lake of the Ozarks, MO

www.safetycouncilmoks.com
shc@safetycouncilmoks.com

"I have a question?"

"What are the OSHA citations for the various safety sections and where can I find them?" K.B. in IA

The General Industry topics are covered in 29 CFR 1910 and it's subsequent text.

The construction specific topics are covered in 29 CFR 1926 and it's subsequent text.

Both can be found at:
www.OSHA.gov.