

Date: Tue, 23 Mar 1999 11:28:57 -0600
From: Meredith Brown <racer@lanl.gov>
Subject: Blue Alert: Forktruck Spotters

Title: Forktrucks in confined areas need spotters

Identifier: 1999-NVO-BN-002 Date: 3/1/99

Lessons Learned Statement: Skilled workers may become complacent as they repetitively operate familiar equipment within the same environment and therefore not recognize a situation that is potentially hazardous.

Discussion of activities: On 2/24/99, a skilled mechanical technician, who was fully trained and qualified, was operating a forktruck in support of a test activity. The task required him to operate the forktruck near chemical containers. During the task completion, the technician was seen leaning out of his forktruck. The technician was asked to cease working on the task pending an investigation.

Analysis: The size of the forktruck precluded the technician clearly viewing the gas bottles he was attempting to move. The technician was leaning out of the forktruck in an effort to see where to place the tines. There was the potential for losing control of the forktruck in an area that contained hazardous chemicals. The operator was trained to engage in the use of a spotter as required by company procedures and federal safety guidelines. The operator did not use a spotter for the part of the task that required operation near the chemical containers.

Recommended Actions: The operator is restricted from operating forktrucks until he repeats a Forktruck Training course, both the academic and the practical evaluation. The project manager met with facility employees to discuss the need to use a spotter near chemicals, when transporting chemicals, in congested areas, during critical lifts, and at all other times that they believe using a spotter will result in a safer operation.

Originator: Mike McLaurin (702) 295-6305
Contact: Dawn M. Starrett (702) 295-4297 starred@nv.doe.gov
Authorized Derivative Classifier: Jeff Gordon
Reviewing Official: Jeff Gordon
Priority Descriptor: Blue Alert
DOE Functional Category: Human Factors
User-Defined Functional Category: Equipment Operations
Keywords: forktruck, spotters, chemical containers, complacency
References: N/A

Follow-up Actions: Information in this report is accurate to the best of our knowledge. As a means of measuring the effectiveness of this report, please contact the originator of significant action(s) taken as a result of this report or of any technical inaccuracies you find. Your feedback is appreciated.