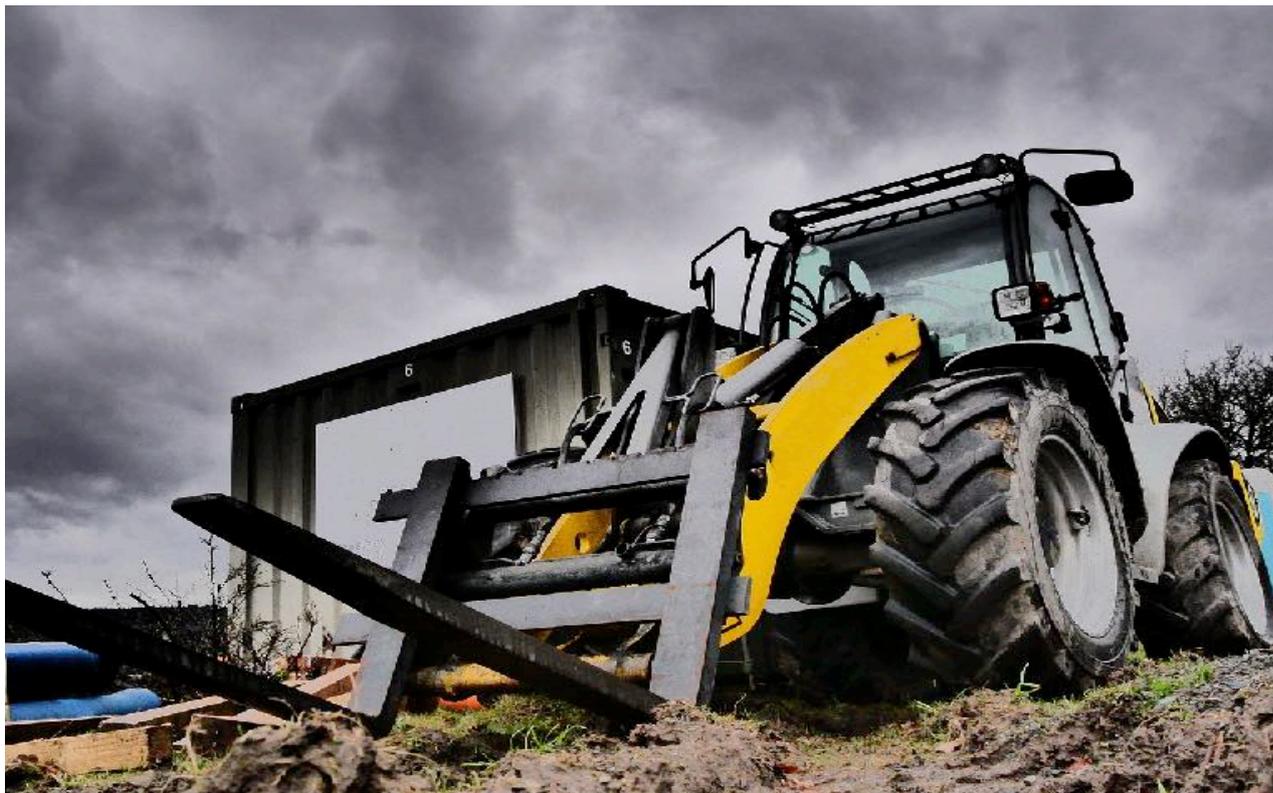# How to reduce forklift accidents onsite

Forklift accidents are a major contributor to workplace injuries and unfortunately, they occur all the time. According to SafeWork NSW, 1360 workers were injured in forklift accidents between July 2012 and July 2014.

Just two weeks ago, two men were taken to Townsville Hospital after a collision accident. About a year ago, a woman was struck by a forklift at a vegetable processing plant in Bunjurgen QLD. And in early 2016, a man was crushed by a forklift, receiving severe chest injuries at an Ipswich industrial site.

When accidents such as these occur, they're costly to those personally involved in the accident through injury or even death. They're also costly to business owners as reputations are damaged and insurance premiums are escalated. The overall morale of workers is affected.

There are a wide variety of reasons as to why forklift accidents occur but much of the time, they're preventable and avoidable. Below are some methods you can use to prevent forklift accidents within your workplace.

Use boundaries to separate people and vehicles

One of the simplest ways to prevent forklift accidents is by separating pedestrians from the area in which forklifts are operating. You can use guard rails, fencing, traffic islands or even bright yellow tape stuck to the floor to create your boundaries.

The key to this method is to make sure all onsite staff comply with the boundaries set up by safety officers, floor managers or business owners. Your workers **must recognise and acknowledge** the borders and boundaries which you've set up.

By keeping pedestrians and heavy vehicles away from each other, you will reduce the risk of collision.

Provide greater visibility

Worksites can have poor visibility for a variety of reasons. Some might be too dark due to poor lighting. Outdoor sites may be covered in dust clouds. Warehouses may be packed with corridors creating a multitude of blind spots, heightening the potential for collision.

If your worksite is too dark, brighten it up by installing better lighting or more lighting. If your site is covered in dust clouds and dirt, stop working for a moment and let the dust settle before continuing. If you're in an environment full of blind spots, install dome mirrors so your workers can see what's coming around the corner.

Giving your workers the ability to see clearly is key to reducing the risk of accidents.

Implement proximity warning systems

One of the strongest methods of reducing forklift accidents is to implement a control system such as a proximity warning system. Many of the methods by which we try to reduce forklift accidents are largely reliant on the worker's ability to comply with rules — while you're not there to enforce them.

A correctly implemented proximity warning system doesn't require you to hover over your workers to ensure they don't get into accidents.

Installed in the vehicle itself, a good proximity warning system will warn forklift drivers of a collision well before it happens. Even from around a blind corner. They also let forklift drivers know when they're in a zone they shouldn't be.

Want to reduce the risk of forklift accidents on your site?

A proximity warning system is a direct way of letting your workers know when an accident is about to happen.

While creating boundaries and providing improved visibility will help, a proximity warning system can speak right into your forklift driver's ear and tell them to hit the brake.
If you're in need of a proximity warning system, feel free to get in touch with us.
Consultation is **FREE**.