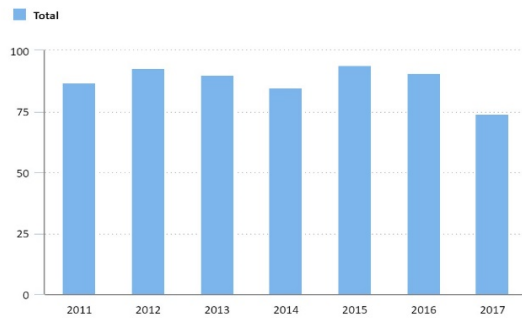


## The theme this month is Forklift Safety

Powered industrial trucks (forklifts), are one of the most common pieces of heavy equipment used throughout industry and our PPI member companies are no exception. Forklifts can be considered a workhorse of industry by making so many heavy-duty tasks much easier and efficient. Our PPI members rely on forklifts to get the job done both in operations and more frequently in the shipping and distribution aspects of the business.

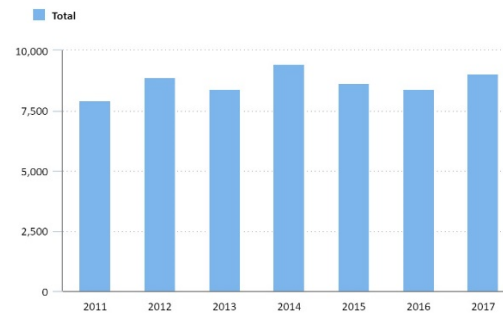
Forklifts also present a significant hazard in the workplace to both operators and other employees who may have occasion to work around forklifts. Forklifts weigh anywhere from 4000 – 9000lbs depending on size. For comparison an average automobile weighs 3000lbs. Here are some statistics that show just how dangerous forklifts can be. A number of fatalities and non-fatal injuries are associated with forklift operation every year.

Fatal occupational injuries involving forklifts, 2011-17



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses involving forklifts, 2011-17



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Forklift incident related fatalities most often occur due to forklift overturns, workers in the area being struck by a moving forklift, and victims are crushed against fixed objects by the forklift.

### Safe practices to keep in mind when operating a forklift

1. Forklift operators should be trained and licensed (OSHA requires a performance evaluation every 3 years, consider annual training, and relicensing every 2-3 years)
2. Seatbelts when available should be used.
3. Traveling backwards when the load on the forks is obstructing your view or when you are traveling up an incline, always look toward the path of travel and keep a clear line of sight.
4. Do not raise or lower forks while the forklift is in motion.
5. On grades tilt the load back and raise it only as far as needed to clear the road surface.
6. All forklifts should be equipped with a back-up notification system and operating horn.
7. Speed limits should be posted and enforced.
8. Operate the forklift at speeds that will permit it to be stopped safely.
9. Provide mirrors for blind corners so operators and workers can see around corners.
10. Slow down and sound the horn at cross aisles and any location where vision is obstructed.
11. Strategically locate stop signs in high trafficked areas.
12. Clearly identify paths for workers/pedestrians (wear yellow safety vests) to use when in warehouse areas and yards.
13. Do not use a forklift to elevate workers who are standing on the forks. There are specially designed platforms for this type of work.

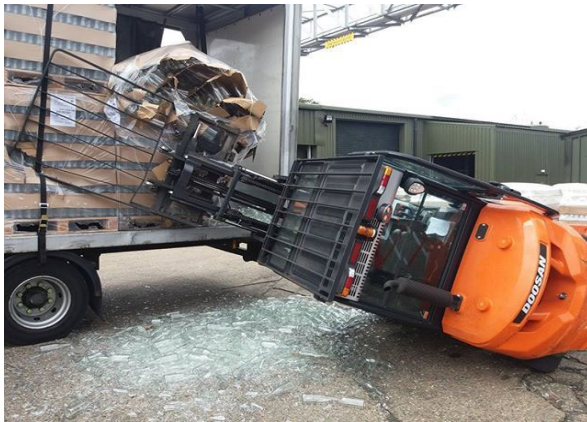
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14. Do not drive up to a co-worker who is standing in front of a fixed object.
15. Do not handle loads that are heavier than the weight capacity of the truck.
16. Know the maximum lifting capacities of your forklift and the weight of the load prior to making any lifts.

### **Reminder - Recordable Tracking and Sharing of Corrective Actions:**

PPI is encouraging your company to participate in this monthly report. Background on this process and the template are attached for your reference. Questions should be directed to David Fink at [dfink@plasticpipe.org](mailto:dfink@plasticpipe.org). We look forward to your company's participation so that together we can support each other in continuous improvement of our safety performance.

### **Safety Minute of the Month: Using Forklift Seatbelts – Lets All Buckle-UP!!!**



Seat belts save lives. We know that to be true when we think of automobiles. Surely, we want our families to be safe when we travel on vacations or when your teen driver takes the car out by themselves for the very first time.

Unfortunately, seat belts in a forklift are often viewed as being optional. Some operators and managers have the impression that there is no inherent danger in operating a forklift. The opposite is true. Tipping over is the biggest danger for a worker operating a forklift. If a worker jumps or is thrown from a tipping forklift, the chances for a serious injury or a fatality are high. The safest place for an operator to be in the event of a rollover is securely strapped into his/her seat using the restraint system. History tells us that operators who were seriously injured in rollover events were often not buckled in.

Member companies should be aware of OSHA's position on forklift seat belts:

"OSHA's enforcement policy on the use of seatbelts of powered industrial trucks is that employers are obligated to require operators of powered industrial trucks, that are equipped with operator restraint devices, including seatbelts, to use the devices."