Forklift Awareness: More Than Just a Big Fork Stats and Facts



FACTS

1. **Blind-Spot Struck-By:** Forklifts have large blind zones; pedestrians can be hit when operators turn, reverse, or travel with elevated loads.
2. **Tip-Over Forces:** High centers of gravity, uneven floors, ramps, or sharp turns can cause sudden rollovers that crush operators or nearby workers.
3. **Load Instability:** Poorly secured or oversized loads can shift or fall, striking workers or pulling the truck off balance.
4. **Pinch & Crush Zones:** Mast channels, chains, and carriage movement create pinch points that can trap hands, arms, or clothing during operation or maintenance.
5. **Dock & Edge Falls:** Dock plates, trailer creep, and unprotected edges increase the risk of forklifts driving off docks or trailers.
6. **Battery & Fuel Hazards:** Charging lead-acid batteries releases hydrogen gas; improper charging or fueling can cause fires, explosions, or chemical burns.

STATS

- The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported dozens of worker fatalities each year involving industrial vehicles such as forklifts, with struck-by and tip-over events prominent (2021–2023).
- U.S. workplaces record tens of thousands of nonfatal forklift injuries annually requiring days away from work, primarily fractures, sprains, and contusions (BLS).
- Forklifts are consistently listed among the top OSHA-cited hazards when training, maintenance, or safe operation requirements are not met, per the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
- In Canada, forklifts are involved in about 10% of workplace fatalities and 5% of serious injuries each year (2020-2025), equating to roughly one fatality and 400 serious injuries annually in sectors like warehousing.