

Injuries from forklift incidents

In warehouses, factories, shipping yards, freight terminals and other workplaces across Australia, forklifts are used to lift, stack and transfer loads.

While forklifts offer a practical materials handling solution for many businesses, each year they continue to be associated with workplace deaths and injuries.

For a forklift, tipping over is one of the biggest dangers when operating a forklift. Overturning and tipping is a leading cause of deaths involving forklifts, accounting for one in six deaths. The chances of a forklift operator sustaining serious harm are high if the forklift operator decides to jump from an unstable forklift.



There are several instances where a forklift can tip over; these include rolling or overturning the forklift sideways or by pitching forward when the back wheels lift off the ground.

According to a guide on forklift safety from Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, forklifts can tip over if you:

- collide with another vehicle
- brake too quickly, especially with a loaded forklift
- brake or accelerate while cornering
- accelerate quickly in reverse
- carry a load facing down a slope
- brake or accelerate down a slope
- carry an unevenly balanced load
- drive with the tines raised too high (loaded or unloaded)
- strike low doors or overhead structures
- drive across inclines or uneven ground such as potholes (particularly with a height difference greater than 20mm across the front wheels)
- turn too fast

To ensure your own safety, and that of others, always operate forklifts safely.

However, if tipping occurs you should:

- stay in the cabin with the seatbelt on
- brace yourself with your feet pressing down and your arms pushing you back into your seat
- stay with the forklift and lean in the opposite direction of tipping

Information for this article was sourced from www.worksafe.qld.gov.au and www.worksafe.vic.gov.au . For further forklift safety information contact MLA Holdings on 131 652 or www.mlaholdings.com.au.