



ILA-USMX JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

OSH Circular 2018-05 (21 May 2018)

Backing Up [In-Reverse] Hazards



Over a period of many years, the marine cargo handling industry in the United States has experienced dozens of fatal/serious accidents wherein industrial trucks (forklifts, top loaders, reach stackers, empty handlers, pickup trucks, etc.) have, when being operated in reverse, struck pedestrian workers.

The ILA~USMX Joint Safety Committee offers this advice:

- Get to know your vehicle's blind spots. In a medium-sized vehicle, blind spots can extend up to 160 feet to the rear. Drivers need to remember that mirrors can never give the whole picture while backing up. If the circumstance is permissive, use a spotter to guide you.
- Think in advance. Drivers should not put themselves into unnecessary backing situations.
- Pedestrian activities should be discouraged/minimized. Workers should be provided transport to work stations or, alternatively, be restricted to dedicated pedestrian walkways
- Conduct a walk-around. Walking around a vehicle gives a driver firsthand view of the backing area and any limitations. They can check for pedestrians, uneven road surfaces, potholes, tire hazards, and other dangers.
- Every backing situation is new and different. Sometimes a driver visits the same location several times a day/hour and must be watchful each visit for changes and any new obstacles.
- In some large volume operations, consider exploring the possibility of rear view cameras and/or early warning Laser/RFID pedestrian sensing devices.

Got an OSH-related question? Write to the JSC at: blueoceana@optonline.net

Working Together For The Benefit Of All

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