Forklift Operator Struck by Other Forklift



INCIDENT

Tragically, Thanksgiving Day was the last day of McKithen Carter's life. She was one of 900 people employed at the shopping network's facility. She was 30 feet in the air on her forklift reaching for something overhead when it was struck by another forklift.

Her forklift overturned which caused her to fall despite the fact that she was wearing a safety harness. She died later that day in the hospital.

NEED TO KNOW

Agnes Ann McKithen Carter, a 45 years old warehouse worker was a forklift operator. She was assigned to work on Thanksgiving Day at the Florence South Carolina facility. It ships 1000 packages an hour and 1.7 million in a year.

BUSINESS / REGULATIONS

Modern industrial experience in the warehouse revolves around the role of the forklift. The forklift is the underpinning of the operation of a warehouse. There is a glaring statistic – 80% of forklift injuries are caused by human error and miscalculation.

There is one immutable principle in the operation of forklift.

That is a forklift operator must be both qualified and authorized to operate a forklift. Many accidents occur when untrained personal drive a forklift. Forklifts operate different from an automobile.

Florence County Coroner Keith Von Lutcken and the South Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) are investigating the tragedy.

Transportation and warehousing are among the most dangerous industries in the United States, with a fatality rate of 14 deaths for every 100.000 workers in 2013 – 733 deaths overall. One hundred people die each year while operating forklifts, according to federal OSHA.

“Forklifts turnovers,” OSHA says, “account for a significant percentage of these fatalities.”

The family and personal story is especially heartfelt. She had married 8 months before the tragedy.

The news reached her husband, Charles Carter, Jr., as he was preparing dinner for their first thanksgiving together.” Never expected this,” Carter told WPDE.

“like I said when she left that morning, it was our first thanksgiving. You know and I’m sitting here looking at the clock and 2:45 never came. Not for us to start our first thanksgiving. Never came. What did come was tragedy, heartbreak, disappointment.”

In addition to her husband, McKithen Carter is survived by her four children; her parents James and Ruth; her two children; six reminding sisters; five brothers; two godchildren; and one of her grandparents.

STATISTICS

There are a number of reasons why forklifts can be such a workplace hazard.

They can weigh up to 9.000 pounds, which is three times heavier that many cars. They can travel up to 18 mph unlike a car, forklifts only have brakes in the front, making them harder to stop. Forklifts are heavier in the rear to compensate for the heavy loads being carried in the front. This uneven weigh distribution can make a forklift is turned by the rear wheels, causing the rear end to swing outward. This increases the chance of tipping over during tight turns. Loads are carried in the front of a forklift, which can obstruct the view of the driver. Forklifts are often used to raise hefty loads to considerable heights, a combination that is always dangerous.

Extreme caution in the operation of a forklift is necessary.

- Forklifts account for around 85 deaths every year.
- Forklifts accidents that result in serious injury total 34.900 annually.
- Non-serious injuries related to forklifts accidents reach 61.800 each year.
- A forklift overturning is the most common incident, accounting for 24%vof all forklift accidents.
- If companies implemented more stringent training policies, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) estimates that about 70% of forklift accidents in the US could be prevented.
- A forklift is a dangerous piece of machinery. There some pretty grim accidents statistics to back up that notion. In reality, forklifts account for only 1% of all warehouse or factory accidents. But the accidents tend to be more serious than others, accounting for 10% of al physical injuries in those workplaces.

PREVENTION

Prevention of forklift incidents will take shape and form if the following points are implemented in the operation of forklifts.

- You must be both authorized and qualified before operating a forklift.
- Inspect the vehicle before operating it. The controls, brakes tires lights,

horn and other parts must be functioning correctly. Follow the manufacturer’s checklist for these daily inspections.

- Check the loaf capacity of the forklift. Know the load capacity of any floors, elevators, ramps or trailers which you will be driving onto.
- Drive within the speed limit.
- Stop as required at intersections sound the horn before proceeding around blind corners.
- If you can’t see around a load, drive backwards.
- Most forklifts are designed as one person vehicles. Do not pick up passengers.
- Never allow anyone to walk under the raised forks, and never leave a load suspended in the air without being at the controls.
- Be aware of the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning around gasoline – powered forklifts.
- Proper maintenance of engines will help prevent carbon monoxide accumulations.
- Follow al precautions for safe refueling of a forklift.
- When travelling up or down an incline with a loaded forklift, keep the load uphill from you.
- Travel slowly on ramps.
- Keep your head, hands and feet inside the operator’s compartment. Never reach through the uprights.
- Look before you back up.
- Keep the load low. Stop before you raise the load.
- Be aware of maximum height clearances.
- Watch for slippery surfaces, potholes and other hazards. Use the correct forklift for the surface on which you will be travelling. If a forklift is designed for indoor travel on smooth surfaces, it is hazardous to use it on outdoor terrain.

By following through with the preventative procedures and cautions, “an ounce of prevention will yield a pound of cure”