Forklift Safety – The Danger Zone Stats and Facts



FACTS

1. **Proximity to Operating Forklifts:** Walking or working near moving forklifts increases the risk of being run over, pinned, or struck by the equipment.
2. **Rear-End Swing Collisions:** The rear of a turning forklift swings outward, creating a danger zone that can strike nearby workers unexpectedly.
3. **Visibility Limitations:** Operators may not see pedestrians standing or walking within the danger zone due to obstructed views or distraction.
4. **Narrow Aisles and Congested Areas:** Limited space forces pedestrians and forklifts to share tight zones, increasing the chance of contact.
5. **Load Instability and Tip-Overs:** Unstable or elevated loads can fall into the danger zone, causing struck-by injuries to nearby workers.
6. **Unexpected Starts or Direction Changes:** Sudden forklift movements without warning can trap or strike workers standing too close.
7. **Improper Signage or Floor Markings:** Lack of designated walkways or hazard zones leaves workers unaware they've entered a high-risk area.

STATS

- In 2023, 67 US workers died in forklift-related incidents, with many occurring in danger zones like loading areas and intersections due to pedestrian strikes.
- From 2021-2022, US forklift accidents caused 24,960 days-away, restricted, or transferred (DART) cases, often from collisions in high-traffic danger zones.
- In 2020, 78 US fatalities were attributed to forklift accidents, primarily tip-overs and strikes in unstable or crowded danger zones.
- Forklifts contribute to about 34,900 serious injuries annually in the US, with 25% involving overturns in danger zones from uneven surfaces or sharp turns.
- In Canada, forklifts account for 10% of workplace fatalities and 5% of serious injuries yearly (2020-2022), largely in danger zones with poor visibility or traffic.
- US forklift incidents result in an average of 16 missed workdays per case (2021-2022), double the national average, due to severe injuries in danger

zones.
- 70% of US forklift accidents, including those in danger zones like ramps and corners, are preventable with proper training and hazard awareness.