

Forklift safety hazards include carbon monoxide poisoning

Forklifts are commonly used in the manufacturing and construction industry, making it vital that workers and employers in these industries understand the safety risks associated with forklifts.

While many employers understand their duty to educate and train employees on how to drive forklifts, many employers and workers don't understand the hazards of using forklifts and the importance of properly ventilating a warehouse or work area when using a forklift.

Not properly ventilating an area where a forklift will be used can be very dangerous for workers. A recent workplace safety incident shows just how dangerous forklifts can be and how many workers are unaware of certain hazards to their health.

Four workers became ill and almost passed out after working around a forklift that was powered by liquid petroleum gas (LPG). Because the warehouse they were working in was properly ventilated, the workers breathed in too much of the gas and became ill. The incident could have much worse if a worker would have passed out while using machinery or performing job duties that could have resulted in a serious accident or fatality.

An investigation of the work site found that it had no mechanical ventilation, making it very dangerous to be operating LPG forklifts. In addition, the site did not have carbon monoxide detectors and lacked employee training.

This incident shows the importance of understanding the hazards of using forklifts and other machinery inside.

Employers and workers need to understand the hazards associated with carbon monoxide poisoning, especially if they are working with forklifts and other machinery powered by LPG. Failing to monitor carbon monoxide levels and train workers about these hazards can result in fatal consequences.

Source: EHS Today, "[Forklift Safety Is No Laughing Matter](#)," Tom Andel, Feb. 5, 2013