

Powered Industrial Truck Inspection Guide

A vehicle that is in need of repair, defective or in any way unsafe should be removed from service. The problem should be recorded on a log and reported to a supervisor immediately. This section discusses pre-operation and operational inspections that operators should perform to ensure that forklifts will operate safely. Only operators who have been trained and evaluated in accordance with [29 CFR 1910.178\(l\)](#) can operate forklifts.

OSHA requires that all forklifts be examined at least daily before being placed in service. Forklifts used on a round-the-clock basis must be examined after each shift. [[29 CFR 1910.178\(q\)\(7\)](#)]

Pre-Operational Inspection

The operator should conduct a pre-start visual check with the key off and then perform an operational check with the engine running. The forklift should not be placed in service if the examinations show that the vehicle may not be safe to operate.

Remember! A vehicle in need of repair, defective or in any way unsafe, should not be driven and should be taken out of service immediately. Any problems should be recorded on the appropriate documents and reported to a supervisor.

Before starting your vehicle, conduct a pre-operation (or pre-start) inspection that checks a variety of items, including but not limited to:

- Fluid levels -- oil, water, and hydraulic fluid.
- Leaks, cracks or any other visible defect including hydraulic hoses and mast chains. NOTE: Operators should not place their hands inside the mast. Use a stick or other device to check chain tension.
- Tire condition and pressure including cuts and gouges.
- Condition of the forks, including the top clip retaining pin and heel.
- Load backrest extension.
- Finger guards.
- Safety decals and nameplates. Ensure all warning decals and plates are in place and legible. Check that information on the nameplate matches the model and serial numbers and attachments.
- Operator manual on truck and legible.
- Operator compartment. Check for grease and debris.
- All safety devices are working properly including the seat belt.

In addition to this general inspection, additional items should be checked depending on the forklift type (electric or internal combustion, including liquid propane). These include but are not limited to:

Electric Forklifts

- Cables and connectors for frayed or exposed wires
- Battery restraints
- Electrolyte levels
- Hood latch

Note: Always use personal protective equipment such as a face shield, rubber apron, and rubber gloves when checking electrolyte.

Internal Combustion Forklifts

- Engine oil
- Brake reservoir
- Engine coolant
- Air filter
- Belts and hoses
- Radiator
- Hood latch

Liquid Propane Forklifts

- Properly mounted tank
- Pressure relief valve pointing up
- Hose and connectors
- Tank restraint brackets
- Tank for dents and cracks
- Tank fits within profile of truck
- Leaks

Note: Always use personal protective equipment such as a face shield, long sleeves, and gauntlet gloves when checking liquid propane tanks and fittings.

Operational Inspection

After completing the pre-operation inspection, operators should conduct an operational inspection with the engine running. This inspection includes:

- Accelerator linkage
- Inch control (if equipped)
- Brakes
- Steering
- Drive control: forward and reverse
- Tilt control: forward and back
- Hoist and lowering control
- Attachment control
- Horn
- Lights
- Back-up alarm (if equipped)
- Hour meter

Requirements and Recommended Practices

The OSHA powered industrial truck standard [[29 CFR 1910.178](#)] lists a number of conditions under which a forklift must be removed from service. If the operator notes these conditions while driving, the operator must stop, park the vehicle and get assistance.

- Any powered industrial truck not in safe operating condition shall be removed from service. All repairs shall be made by authorized personnel. [[29 CFR 1910.178\(q\)\(1\)](#)]
- Defects when found must be immediately reported and corrected. [[29 CFR 1910.178\(q\)\(7\)](#)]
- Any vehicle that emits hazardous sparks or flames from the exhaust system shall immediately be removed from service, and not returned to service until the cause for the emission of such sparks and flames has been eliminated. [[29 CFR 1910.178\(q\)\(8\)](#)]
- When the temperature of any part of any truck is found to be in excess of its normal operating temperature, thus creating a hazardous condition, the vehicle shall be removed from service and not returned to service until the cause for such overheating has been eliminated. [[29 CFR 1910.178\(q\)\(9\)](#)]
- No truck shall be operated with a leak in the fuel system until the leak has been corrected. [[29 CFR 1910.178\(p\)\(4\)](#)]