

KCGO Member Notice

Forklift Safety – June 2024

In recent months, the Health and Safety Advice Line has seen a rise in forklift-related incidents in Australian and New Zealand businesses, with **11 cases reported in the last four months**. This trend underscores the need for improved safety procedures and training.

From January to May 2024, incidents included crush injuries, near misses, and falls. Crush injuries were the most frequent, often occurring when forklifts interacted with pedestrians or other vehicles. This emphasizes the need for strict traffic management and proper machine operation training.

Near misses, while not resulting in injuries, pointed to the potential for severe accidents, highlighting the need for stringent safety checks and adherence to procedures. Notable incidents involved hydraulic spills and unsecured loads, which were contained but could have had serious consequences.

These incidents spanned various industries, including construction, manufacturing, wholesale, and logistics, indicating that forklift safety is a widespread issue. Most incidents occurred in settings lacking adequate separation of forklift traffic from pedestrian areas or where safety measures, such as seatbelt usage, were ignored.

It has been advised of the following for improved prevention:

1. Ensure all forklift operators hold a high-risk work forklift license or are supervised if in training.
2. Implement comprehensive traffic management plans to separate forklifts and pedestrian areas.
3. Conduct regular safety drills and training to emphasize safety measures like seatbelt use and securing loads.
4. Regularly maintain and inspect forklifts to prevent mechanical failures.