• Only trained and licensed personnel are permitted to operate WHOI’s forklifts of less than 10,000 lbs capacity. WHOI forklift licenses are issued by the EH&S office under the following conditions: 1) must successfully complete WHOI’s forklift training and exams, 2) must possess a valid State-issued driver’s license, 3) must be at least 18 years of age, 4) must follow these rules, and 5) must safely operate the forklifts.

• Forklifts above 10,000 lbs capacity are more complex and demand advanced skills and special training. Requests for training and authorization to operate these forklifts shall be reviewed and approved by the Facilities Director. The following requirements must be followed for these forklifts: 1) you must be currently licensed as a WHOI forklift operator in good standing, 2) you must receive specific training from an experienced operator on the forklift you intend to operate, and 3) operator-specific approval from the Facilities Director is required for driving these forklifts on a public road and is restricted to certain individuals.

• Forklifts of all capacities shall not be operated on public roads unless registered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the operator has completed the WHOI Driver Safety Online Training and Quiz.

• Forklifts shall be inspected by the designated operator before use. Forklifts that are unsafe to operate shall be immediately removed from service and reported to the Facilities Department for repairs.

• Seat belts shall be used at all times when operating the forklift. No personnel other than the operator may ride on a forklift. Keep arms and legs safely inside the forklift operator’s compartment/cage.

• No person shall be allowed to pass under the elevated parts of a forklift or a suspended load.

• Personnel shall not be elevated using the tines/forks. Personnel may be elevated using an attachment approved for that purpose by the manufacturer and with proper fall protection.

• When a forklift is left unattended, the forks shall be fully lowered, controls placed in neutral, power shut off, and brakes set. When a LP gas forklift is left unattended in an enclosed space (e.g., high bay, shop), the LP tank’s shut-off valve must be closed and the forklift should be parked at a safe distance from ignition sources (e.g., open flame, sources of heat).

• Brakes shall be set and wheel chocks or trailer locking mechanism shall be in place to prevent movement of trucks/trailers during loading or unloading with a forklift.

• When moving, operators shall look in the direction of travel, maintain a safe speed at all times, and forks should be kept as close to the ground as possible.

• Operators shall slow down, sound the horn and proceed with caution at cross aisles, at locations where vision is obstructed, and when pedestrians are observed in the direction of travel.

• When the load being carried obstructs the forward view, the operator shall travel with the load trailing.

• Grades shall be ascended or descended slowly with the load upgrade and forks tilted back.

• Only loads within the rated capacity of the forklift shall be handled. Only stable and safely arranged loads shall be handled.

Reference: Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1910.178
Mass Department of Public Safety 105 CMR 6.00 (Hoisting Regulations)

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