

Lifts and Lifting Operations: Employee Factsheet

REMEMBER: A chain is only as strong as its weakest link so know the safe working load (SWL) of all lifting gear and how to use it safely.

Employee responsibilities:

- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) impose duties on both employers and employees who work with, manage or supervise the use of lifting equipment. Employees also have general duties under The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA) to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions, plus to co-operate with others
- Lifting equipment must not be used to move loads heavier than the Safe working load (SWL)
- Lifting equipment must only be used by people who have been trained to do so
- Never stand over a suspended load
- Look for overhead obstructions such as power cables when undertaking a lift
- Ensure that lifting equipment has no obvious defects before using it
- Make sure lifts are adequately planned
- Ensure loads have correct slinging securely attached.

Do you use or work with:

- Forklift trucks, cranes, high lift pallet trucks, mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs), patient hoists, slings, chains shackles, hooks and eyebolts?

Then you need to be competent in their use, and to understand any instructions on how to carry out the lifting job safely.

General precautions

- Do not use lifting equipment if it is beyond its planned inspection date
- Do not overload lifting equipment

Did you know?

Each year, unsafe lifting practices result in many accidents and injuries, including fatalities.

Lifting equipment now includes items of plant (such as forklift trucks and telescopic handlers) all mobile elevating work platforms as well as cranes, electrical hoists, gin wheels, patient hoists etc.

Fatal accidents involving lifting gear are often caused by misuse or neglect of equipment.

Generally accidents are caused by the failure of people, not equipment.

Do you know?

- Where to obtain information and guidance?
- how to seek help and support?

If you are concerned about any of these issues, talk to your health and safety representative or manager.

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- Ensure any pre-use checks have been carried out
- When using a fork lift truck, travel with the load in the lowest position and do not raise it whilst travelling
- Ensure loads are stable and secure
- Do not use equipment to lift people unless it is specifically designed for that purpose and never lift people on the forks of a fork lift truck (other than in a purpose designed lifting cage designed for passenger use)
- Use cranes to lift and lower loads vertically, do not drag loads
- At least one trained signaller (banksman) must supervise lifting crane lifting operations
- It may be necessary to attach tag lines to the load to stabilise it when lifted
- Beware of changing weather conditions or wind speed making lift operations unsafe
- Use MEWPs only on firm, level ground
- Use outriggers or stabilisers where necessary
- Check the SWL on the sling or shackle against load to be lifted and the configuration of the load
- Ensure no broken ends in wires or chafing on fibre ropes
- Protect wire rope or nylon slings from sharp edges.

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