
Warehouse Pedestrian and Forklift Traffic Separation Rules

1.0 Objective & Intent

The objective of this SOP is to eliminate the risk of pedestrian- forklift collisions within the warehouse by establishing clear physical separation, designated walkways, and mandatory communication protocols. This procedure is required under WorkSafeBC OHS Regulation Part 16 (Mobile Equipment) and Part 9 (Personal Protective Equipment) to protect all personnel from struck-by and crushing hazards inherent in shared traffic zones.

2.0 Operational Scope

This procedure applies to all warehouse areas, including raw material storage, finished goods staging, loading docks, and aiseways within the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility. It covers all personnel (employees, contractors, visitors) and all forklift operations (counterbalance, reach trucks, order pickers). Exceptions require written authorization from the Plant Safety Officer.

3.0 Hazard Identification & Mandatory PPE

- Struck-by hazard: Pedestrians struck by moving forklifts in blind corners or congested aisles.
- Crushing hazard: Pedestrians pinned between forklift and fixed structures (racking, walls).
- Slip/trip hazard: Uneven surfaces at crossing points or debris in walkways.
- Visibility hazard: Poor lighting or obstructed sightlines at intersections and doorways.
- CSA-Approved Steel Toed Boots with puncture-resistant soles.
- High-Visibility Safety Vest (Class 2 or 3, ANSI/ISEA 107) with reflective striping.
- Hard Hat (CSA Z94.1) in all forklift traffic zones.
- Safety Glasses (CSA Z94.3) for all personnel in warehouse.

4.0 Required Safety Equipment & Tools

- Yellow floor tape or painted lines (4-inch minimum width) for pedestrian walkways.
- Physical barriers: bollards, guardrails, or chain-link fencing at high-risk intersections.
- Convex mirrors (360-degree) installed at blind corners and T-junctions.
- Warning signs: 'Pedestrian Crossing', 'Forklift Traffic', 'Stop Ahead'.
- Audible alarms (back-up beepers, strobe lights) on all forklifts.
- Two-way radios or hand signals for communication between operators and spotters.
- Traffic control plan (site-specific map showing designated routes).

5.0 Step-by-Step Safety Procedure

1. Before entering the warehouse, all personnel must don mandatory PPE: steel-toed boots, high-visibility vest, hard hat, and safety glasses. Verify that the vest is zipped and reflective strips are visible.

2. Pedestrians must use only designated walkways marked with yellow tape or painted lines. Never walk in forklift travel lanes, even briefly. If a walkway is blocked, stop and notify a supervisor; do not detour into traffic lanes.
3. At all intersections and blind corners, pedestrians must stop at the painted 'Stop Line' (if present) or at the edge of the travel lane. Make eye contact with any approaching forklift operator before proceeding. Use the convex mirror to check for oncoming traffic.
4. Forklift operators must sound the horn (one short blast) before entering any intersection, doorway, or area with obstructed views. Operators must reduce speed to walking pace (max 5 km/h) in all pedestrian zones and at crossings.
5. When a forklift is approaching from behind, pedestrians must step to the nearest designated safe zone (e.g., behind a bollard or guardrail) and remain stationary until the forklift has passed completely. Never attempt to outrun or walk alongside a moving forklift.
6. All forklifts must be equipped with functioning back-up alarms and strobe lights. Operators must test these devices at the start of each shift. If a device is faulty, the forklift must be taken out of service immediately and tagged for repair.
7. During loading dock operations, pedestrians must stay behind the designated yellow line or guardrail. No pedestrian is permitted in the dock area while a forklift is actively loading or unloading a trailer unless they are the designated spotter and have communicated with the operator.
8. In the event of a near-miss or collision, all operations in the affected zone must stop immediately. The area must be secured with cones or barriers. The Plant Safety Officer must be notified and an incident investigation initiated before operations resume.
9. At the end of each shift, supervisors must inspect designated walkways and barriers for damage or wear. Any missing tape, damaged bollards, or non-functional mirrors must be reported to maintenance and repaired before the next shift begins.

Regulatory Disclaimer: This document is a generic safety template provided for educational and informational purposes only. It does not constitute professional engineering, legal, or regulatory compliance advice. The end-user assumes all liability for validating all safety protocols against specific machinery manufacturer manuals and local occupational health and safety regulations (e.g., WorkSafeBC, CSA standards) before deployment.