



April 16 — Make Eye Contact

<p>An employee was backing up on a forklift while another employee was walking behind him.</p>	<p>The employee who was walking stopped to try to make eye contact with the driver. When they finally made contact with one another, he crossed the street and carried on with the task.</p>
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A forklift was backing up while an employee was walking behind it.

The employee stopped, made eye contact with the operator, and waited before crossing.

Nothing happened. And that's exactly why this one matters.

Forklifts move constantly — forward, backward, turning, adjusting. But when they're backing, visibility is limited. What looks clear from the ground doesn't always look the same from the operator's seat.

The employee could have kept walking. Assumed he was seen. Trusted the operator would stop.

But he didn't. He paused. Confirmed. Then moved.

That small decision is what keeps a routine moment from turning into a serious incident.

Because when it comes to moving equipment, it's not about being right. It's about being seen.

This wasn't about correcting a mistake. It was about making the right call before one happened.

Hazards

- Struck-by from reversing forklift
- Blind spot exposure
- Crushing injuries
- Pinch points
- Miscommunication between worker and operator
- Line of fire exposure to motion energy

Stats

- Forklift incidents cause thousands of injuries each year
- Pedestrians are involved in a large number of struck-by incidents
- Blind spots are a leading factor in reversing accidents
- Many incidents occur when workers assume they are visible but are not.

Words of Wisdom

- If you're not seen, you're at risk
- Eye contact is control
- Don't assume, confirm

Pause and Think

Working around equipment can start to feel routine. You hear it, you see it, and over time you get comfortable moving around it. That comfort can turn into assumption. "I'm good." or "They see me." But visibility isn't guaranteed.

And once you step into that space, you're relying on someone else's awareness not your own. Taking a second to confirm doesn't slow the job down. It keeps it moving safely.

- Do I make eye contact before entering equipment travel paths?
- Do I assume operators see me without verifying?
- Am I aware of blind spots around moving equipment?
- Would I stop and wait, even if I'm in a hurry?