



## April 6 — Seen vs. Unseen

<b>New hire employee was working in close area to all terrain forklift!</b>	<b>Took the employee to the side and explained to him that the operator may not see him when backing up to be aware, then I noticed that the forklift had no backup mirrors.</b>
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A new employee was working near an operating forklift, positioned close enough that the operator may not have seen him especially while backing.

He wasn't doing anything wrong. He was just in the area. That's what makes this dangerous.

Forklifts have blind spots. The operator's view is limited, especially when reversing or handling a load. What feels like a safe distance from the ground doesn't always look the same from the seat.

The employee likely assumed he was visible. The operator likely assumed the path was clear.

That gap is where incidents happen.

Nothing happened this time. The forklift moved, the work continued.

But in situations like this, it only takes one missed glance, one assumption, or one second of overlap for someone to end up in the line of fire.

This wasn't about doing something unsafe. It was about being in a position where safety depended on being seen.

### Hazards

- Struck-by from moving forklift
- Blind spot exposure during reversing
- Crushing injuries
- Pinch points between equipment and structures
- Limited operator visibility
- Line of fire exposure to motion energy

### Stats

- Forklift-related incidents cause thousands of injuries each year
- Pedestrians are involved in a significant number of struck-by incidents
- Blind spots are a leading factor in mobile equipment injuries
- Many incidents occur when workers believe they are visible but are not

### Words of Wisdom

- If they can't see you, they can't avoid you
- Eye contact is control
- Don't assume visibility confirm it

### Pause and Think

Working around equipment can feel routine, especially when you've been in the area for a while. You start to trust that operators see you, and operators trust that the path is clear.

That's where new workers are most exposed. They may not recognize blind spots, travel paths, or how quickly things can change. And experienced workers can fall into the same trap relying on habit instead of checking.

- Am I making eye contact with operators before entering their path?
- Do I understand where the blind spots are?
- Am I placing myself where I can be clearly seen?
- Would the operator know I'm there without guessing?