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CASUALTY INSURANCE

PROPERTY INSURANCE

For Marina Operators and Boat Dealers



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OCEAN MARINE DIVISION

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OCEAN MARINE DIVISION

**SAFE FORKLIFT
OPERATIONS FOR
MARINA OPERATORS
AND BOAT DEALERS**

**Creative and Skilled
Solutions to Protect
Your Assets**



THE LEADING CAUSES

of boat and motor damage by boat dealers and marina operators are irregular maintenance and improper operation of forklifts. Constant vigilance and regular inspections are key to preventing costly forklift accidents.

Pre-Planning

- Allow adequate clearance in racks, with at least 18" clearance above the boat.
- All doorways should have the vertical clearance clearly marked.
- Check the weight of the load. The maximum weight allowance should be clearly marked on the truck, and should never be exceeded.
- Check the condition and heights of wheel stops at the water's edge. The undercarriage should not ride up on it.

Regular servicing of forklifts is good management practice. A worn hydraulic hose on a forklift lifting a boat onto the third tier of a dry rack is a sure recipe for disaster. Equally hazardous are worn brake pads while operating with a load near the water or on a slope. Establish a written maintenance policy and designate a specific maintenance day each month and adhere to it. In addition to the dealer's preventive maintenance plan, the operator has a duty to inspect the forklift for proper condition prior to each use.

Operator Checklist

- Engine oil and other fluid levels
- Tire condition/inflation
- Steering and hydraulic controls
- Warning devices such as horn and lights
- Service and parking brakes
- Battery level
- Hose condition
- Fluid leaks

Operational Practice

Operational mistakes and human error account for the majority of claims. Driver training classes can heighten awareness of the potential for disaster. Sound operational practice will minimize accidents:

- Authorized drivers only! No riders!
- Visibility is limited. Watch for obstructions and pedestrians. Always work with a spotter.
- Always travel with the forks in the lowered position. Never raise or lower the load while moving.
- Approach the load slowly and carefully. Many accidents are caused by operators driving too fast; putting the forks through a boat; bending props; or damaging transducers.
- Misjudging a bay and dropping a boat from the third tier is a common mistake. Boats on forklifts are inherently unstable due to odd shaped bottoms and centers of gravity. Driving rapidly on uneven pavement can cause them to shift and fall.
- Space forks to distribute weight evenly. Heavy boats can cause the forks to spread and the bow to slide out.
- Tilt the load back to stabilize the load.
- Never walk underneath a load, nor allow anyone else to do so.



- Sound a horn before moving a forklift through doorways, around corners, or when approaching personnel.
- When lifting a boat at the water's edge, make sure that brakes are set.
- Be particularly cautious when driving on wet or greasy floors.
- Avoid quick starts, fast stops, or jerky turns.
- Make sure there is no water in the boat before attempting to lift it. Water significantly increases the weight and makes the load susceptible to shifting.
- Make sure that boats are properly blocked before releasing them from the lift.

Moving boats by forklift is a normal and necessary marina function. Make it a safe one as well!