

7.07

Powered Industrial Trucks Used to Load and Unload

Updated: February 15, 2019

I. Purpose

This DOSH Directive provides guidance to DOSH enforcement and consultation staff in applying the requirements of the Forklifts and Other Powered Industrial Trucks standard, chapter 296-863 WAC, when loading or unloading highway trucks with Powered Industrial Trucks (PITs).

II. Scope and Application

This Directive applies to DOSH operations statewide, and replaces all previous direction, whether formal or informal. **This Directive has been reviewed for applicability, and remains effective with a new issue date of February 15, 2019.**

For the purpose of this Directive, “CSHO” refers to enforcement **and** consultation staff.

III. Reference

- Chapter 296-863 WAC, Forklifts and Other Powered Industrial Trucks

IV. Definition

Powered Industrial Truck (PIT) means a mobile, power-driven vehicle used to carry, push, pull, lift, stack, or tier material.

The definition of PIT is very broad and includes: fork trucks, forklifts, tractors, motorized hand trucks, powered pallet jacks and other specialized industrial trucks. Each one of these PITs has different characteristics, and regional staff and employers have asked when is it appropriate to cite an employer for not chocking or blocking the wheels of a truck or trailer being loaded by a PIT.

V. Background

WAC 296-863-40050 requires that when trucks and trailers are being loaded or unloaded with a Powered Industrial Truck (PIT), the truck or trailer must be secured to prevent movement by the chocking or blocking of the wheels, or with a mechanical device that secures the truck or trailer to the loading dock.

The primary purpose of chocking or blocking the wheels is to prevent the truck or trailer from moving away from the loading dock from the inertia created by the heavy PITs. The PIT may enter at a fairly high rate of speed, and when the operator hits the brakes, it could cause the trailer to creep away from the dock.

VI. Enforcement Policies

- A. When an employer is using a walk-behind motorized hand truck or powered pallet jack to load or unload a truck and trailer without having the wheels chocked or the trailer attached to the dock, CSHOs must consider it a *de minimis* violation of the wheel chocking requirement and not issue a citation.
- B. PITs that an operator rides on are much heavier than the walk-behind motorized hand truck or powered pallet jack, and therefore creates a hazard to the operator loading or unloading trucks.

When trucks or trailers are being loaded or unloaded with a PIT that an operator rides:

- CSHOs must ensure that the employer has adequately secured the truck or trailer (against the dock) with wheel chocks or blocks on both sides of the truck or trailer (in the appropriate location against the tires), or by a mechanical device that secures the truck or trailer to the loading dock.
 - If the CSHO can determine that emergency spring brakes are the mechanical brake system equipped and engaged on the truck and trailer, a chock or block on one side of the truck or trailer (in the appropriate location against the tires) may be considered *de minimis*.
- C. If the truck or trailer is not adequately secured, a citation of WAC 296-863-40050 must be issued.

VII. Who to Contact

For questions about this Directive or chapter 296-863 WAC, contact the DOSH Technical Services Powered Industrial Truck specialist.

VIII. Review and Cancellation

This DOSH Directive will be reviewed for applicability two years from the issue date, and will remain effective unless superseded or canceled.

Approved:



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