

RULES HAVE REASONS

SAFETY TOOL BOX TALK

Sometimes we question why we have certain rules. We can't understand why we need the rules, but rules are in place due to history. Things have happened that we have learned from, therefore a rule was born out of the experience.

Let's use this example: In Michigan a 25-year-old male forklift operator was working on the shipping dock operating a industrial forklift. He was assisting two coworkers and a dock supervisor in unloading pallets from a tractor-trailer parked in a shipping bay. As he backed from the trailer with two pallets on the forks, one of the employees noticed that there was no shipping paperwork on top of the upper pallet. The decedent lowered the load, then backed up and lifted the top pallet approximately three to four feet above the lower pallet. The shipping paperwork was on the top of the lower pallet. The driver could not see the shipping label from a seated position. He placed his left foot on the brake, stood up, and leaned forward, placing his head through the mast of the forklift to read the label. As he leaned forward, his right leg pressed the mast up/down control lever forward. His thigh pushed the lever forward and the mast lowered. His head and neck were caught by the crossbar of the lowering mast. He died 12 days later. There are rules about staying seated on the lift and keeping body parts inside as well.

It may be double tying both ends of the mason's line, wearing a face shield, safety glasses, harnesses being worn just in case it's needed or never taking the guard off a grinder; all these rules are in place because of the dangers of injury. New rules will surface in the future as we learn and experience more concerning injuries.

