



OSHA 1910.178 (1)(2)(iii) states, "All operator training and evaluation shall be conducted by persons who have the knowledge, training, and experience to train powered industrial truck operators and evaluate their competence."

The OSHA Standard does not include a competency standard for trainers other than those qualifications stated above. However, an OSHA competent person is generally understood to be an individual who, by way of training and/or experience, is knowledgeable of the applicable standards (OSHA, ANSI, etc.), is capable of identifying both existing and predictable workplace hazards relating to the specific operation to be performed, and is designated by the employer and has authority to take appropriate actions to ensure safety.

According to the Powered Industrial Truck Operator Training; Final Rule. - 63:66237-66274 published 12/01/1998, OSHA has decided not to include trainer accreditation requirements in the final rule for several reasons.

- First, OSHA believes that the training criteria are sufficiently detailed so that employers and professional trainers who follow the criteria will provide adequate training.
- Second, a large number of trainers and individual employers (potentially in the tens of thousands) would need to be accredited, which would overwhelm OSHA's resources.
- Finally, many small businesses choose to conduct their own training, and requiring them to become accredited to do so would be unnecessarily burdensome.

Although the OSHA Standard leaves the determination of trainer competency at the discretion of the employer, we strongly recommend that you carefully choose your trainer to insure that:

- The trainer is experienced and skilled in the safe and efficient operation of a powered industrial truck(s).
- The trainer is familiar with, comprehends, and employs applicable OSHA codes and all consensus standards as they apply to worker safety and economic impact on the employer.
- The trainer is skilled and practiced in the training of adults or has the ability, knowledge, and desire to attain such skills.

This is no time to "go cheap". Operator safety training is not an expensive service, even from the best training sources. There are many who advertise training services, but finding a source that provides high quality training is difficult.

While the Final Rule states that the training criteria listed in the Standard is "sufficiently detailed so that employers and professional trainers who follow the criteria will provide adequate training", it is a very long leap from understanding the criteria to developing training materials that are sufficiently detailed so as to provide the trainee with:

- An understanding of the engineering design and operational features of the equipment,



- An understanding of, and ability to recognize hazards and determine appropriate remedies so as to avoid accidents,
- An understanding of why the rules of safe operation are constructed as they are and why it is important to follow them consistently at all times.

Few employers have the resources, knowledge, or experience to develop the training materials and evaluation techniques needed to provide proper lift truck operator safety training.

We recommend either of the following means of providing the type of technical training that is necessary in order for employee operators to achieve and maintain an accident free workplace:

- Interview and select a trainer from an independent outside consultant or source, who can clearly demonstrate that they have training materials that will achieve the results stated above, or
- Enroll your in-house trainer in a train-the-trainer program that will provide your candidate with training that will achieve the results stated above, and that will also provide your candidate with a complete "kit" of training materials (lecture notes, slide show, video, and classroom and hands-on exercises) that can be used to conduct effective training that will achieve the results stated above.

There is little value in your trainer candidate attending a one day seminar or online train-the-trainer program that does nothing more than explain the features of a training program. You will spend several hundred dollars and your trainer candidate will still not be prepared to train a single employee, other than in a very informal and non-technical way.

Any train-the-trainer program worthy of time and money expense must provide solid technical training and training materials that can be utilized as soon as the trainer returns to the workplace. Call John Jordan at 216-587-0400 or e-mail to johnj@neonmaterialhandling.com for assistance in developing your in-house training program.