



CHOCKING AND BLOCKING

An essential part of a safe working environment when loading or unloading trucks and trailers is the proper use of equipment, which includes chocks and blocks.

Every year, workers are severely or fatally injured because the wheels of a truck or trailer were not chocked. Vehicle drivers are also injured when trailers overturn because unblocked freight shifted during travel.

Accidents are caused each year when a truck or trailer rolls away from the loading area because no one took time to chock the wheels. In some cases, drivers who got out of the cab were crushed by their own rig.

In other cases, lift truck drivers were injured when the forklift fell between dock edge and a trailer that moved away. The wheels of trucks or trailers at loading dock should always be chocked prior to the start of any operation, to prevent this from happening.

Lift truck drivers should never enter a trailer without first verifying that the wheels have been chocked, and that the floor of the trailer is in good condition and capable of supporting the weight of the forklift and its load. In most states, OSHA requires that vehicle wheels be chocked prior to permitting forklifts to enter trailers.

Positioning of chocks is important. The purpose of the chock is to pin the wheels and hold them stationary so that the truck or trailer can't move. However, if they aren't placed in the right location they don't always prevent movement of the wheels. The safest procedure is to always chock the wheels closest to the dock - especially on a tandem-axle trailer. The reason is, the lift truck entering the trailer can exert a downward force which helps pin the wheels more effectively against the chock. When the front axle is chocked, the forward motion of a forklift entering the trailer may loosen the chock, allowing the trailer to move forward, or even jump the chock.

Be sure the correct equipment is always available. Every loading dock should be equipped with chocks, which if properly used, will keep vehicles from moving while being loaded or unloaded, especially when forklift trucks are used.

Chocks will more likely be available at all times if they are fastened to the dock with a chain or rope to prevent their "disappearance," and stored out of the traffic areas when not in use.