

Loading Dock Safety

TRADE: WAREHOUSE & SHOP OPERATIONS

LEADER GUIDE: 8-12 MINUTES

USE WHAT FITS TODAY

LEADER NOTE

Do not read this sheet word-for-word. Pick the sections that match today's task, point to the actual equipment/work area, and get the crew to answer the questions out loud.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Keep this Loading Dock Safety talk tied to the job in front of the crew. Cover trailer movement, dock edges and forklift traffic, then confirm the setup and who is responsible for the key controls. Work zones fail when drivers, workers and equipment operators receive different messages. Visibility, channelizing devices, escape paths and communication must make the safe path obvious before traffic reaches the work area.

A SCENARIO TO DISCUSS

During Loading Dock Safety, a vehicle enters from a direction the crew did not expect and passes closer to the work area than planned. Nobody is hit. What should be changed before relying on the same setup again?

BEFORE WORK STARTS

- Walk the traffic-control layout from the driver and worker perspective before opening the operation.
- Verify signs/devices, high-visibility apparel, lighting and flagger/spotter positions.
- Identify worker escape paths and equipment entry/exit points.
- Establish travel paths, pedestrian zones and backing controls before equipment begins moving.
- Inspect alarms, lights, mirrors/cameras, tires, brakes and safety devices before operation.

SAFE WORK SEQUENCE / CONTROLS

- Establish travel paths, pedestrian zones and backing controls before equipment begins moving.
- Inspect alarms, lights, mirrors/cameras, tires, brakes and safety devices before operation.
- Use a spotter or signal person when required and stop movement if visual/radio contact is lost.
- Keep workers out of blind spots, swing areas and pinch points; never assume the operator can see you.
- When the planned control for trailer movement, dock edges and forklift traffic is not in place or stops working, stop the task and correct it before the crew continues.

COMMON FAILURE POINTS

- Setting devices from the worker's view without checking what an approaching driver will see.
- Allowing a vehicle/equipment route to cross a pedestrian work path without positive control.
- Keeping the original setup after traffic, visibility or work location changes.

STOP AND RESET IF...

- Signs, cones, drums, barricades or flagger positions no longer match the traffic-control plan.
- Visibility, lighting, weather or traffic volume makes the setup ineffective.
- A worker/equipment movement requires crossing active traffic without a controlled plan.

QUESTIONS THAT SHOULD CHANGE THE JOB

1. What path should drivers, workers, and equipment follow through this setup, and is that path obvious from the driver's point of view?
2. Where is each worker's escape route if a vehicle enters the work area unexpectedly?
3. What change in visibility, lighting, traffic volume, pedestrians, or work position requires us to move devices or stop the operation?
4. Who has authority to change the traffic-control setup, and how will the entire crew learn about the change?
5. What should be changed before relying on the same setup again?

MAKE IT REAL ON THE JOB

Walk the setup from the driver's approach and from the worker's escape route.

BEFORE YOU RELEASE THE CREW

Before the crew starts, everyone should be able to explain the hazard, point to the control being used today, and name the condition that would make the work stop.

ATTENDANCE & SIGN-OFF

Loading Dock Safety

Project / Job:		Date:	
Talk leader:		Location:	

CREW ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing, attendees confirm they participated in this toolbox talk and had the opportunity to raise job-specific questions. Signatures do not replace required training, qualifications, permits or certifications.

#	Name	Company / Trade	Signature
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

QUESTIONS / CONDITIONS / CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

END-OF-TALK CHECK

☐ Crew can point to the main hazard.	☐ Critical control is in place and usable.
☐ The responsible person/check is clear.	☐ Stop/re-brief conditions were discussed.