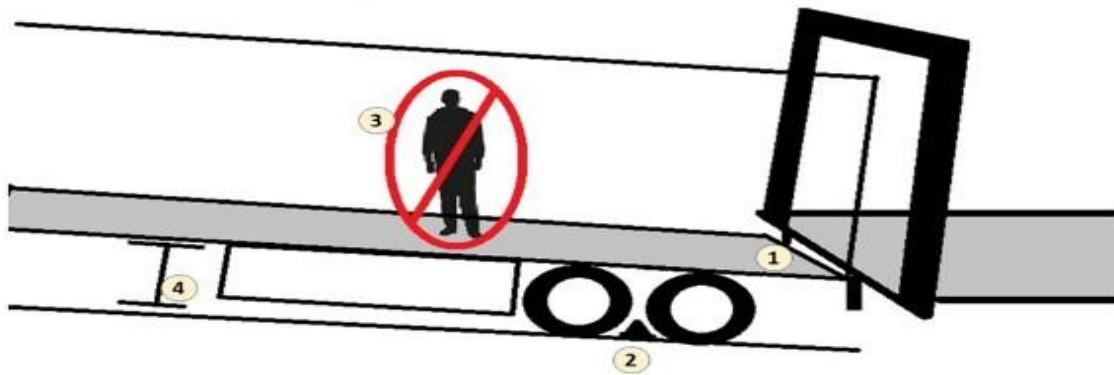


Working on loading docks results in special safety issues and presents a variety of hazards for employees. Workers need to be careful about what they're doing, as well as the equipment they're working with and around. They must also always be aware of other workers in the area—particularly ones using forklifts or other material-handling equipment.



1. Dock plates must have the appropriate capacity, stability, and placement to prevent slips, trips, and falls.
2. Equipment, such as wheel chock and dock locks must be used to prevent the trailer from moving.
3. No one is allowed in the trailer during forklift use for loading or unloading.
4. Use and properly adjust jack stands at the rear of the trailer to prevent load teetering.

Risks Associated with Loading Docks:

- Slips, trips, and falls
- Possibility of being struck by materials or equipment
- Potential of being caught:
 - Between a truck and a loading dock
 - Between two vehicles
 - By conveyors

Other Common Hazards:

- Forklifts overturning
- Forklifts and other powered trucks hitting employees
- Trailer separation
- Unsecured loads
- Debris on floor
- Inclement weather (See slips, trips, and falls)
- Chemical splashes
- Material handling injuries (e.g., lifting, cuts, etc.)
- Unguarded machinery
- Unguarded dock edges

Risk Reduction Practices:

- Keep loading docks clean and free of obstructions, debris, and stored items.
- When not actively loading or unloading of trailers, close dock doors or place barriers, guard rails, bollards, dock barricades, or stops to prevent falls.
- Clean all spills immediately.
- Keep the area free of snow and ice — immediately salt or sand slippery areas.
- Stay clear of equipment when handling heavy or long loads.
- Outline the traffic area with painted (or taped) lines.
- Apply paint or tape near the edge of the dock to reduce the risk of people stepping or driving off.
- Install corner mirrors or a curved ceiling mirror in areas with poor visibility (e.g., corners, angles, or curves in the traffic path or near doors).
- Chock all material and equipment that can roll.
- Secure any tools and equipment that can fall.
- Provide a shelter to protect the loading dock, dock plates, and trailers from the elements.
- Use dock levelers and fixed-position hydraulic dock boards on high-use docks that receive a variety of trucks or railcars.
- Provide the minimum recommended lighting of 20-foot candles. Additional illumination will be required for document reading.
- If chemicals are handled in this area, install a working emergency shower and eyewash station.

General Safety:

- Remember, the loading dock isn't a storage area.
- Be sure the area is clear of vehicles before walking directly in front of a loading dock.
- Always stand to the side when directing the driver of a backing vehicle.

Vehicle:

- Turn off engines at the shipping doors.
- Place wheel chocks ahead of rear wheels to prevent rolling.
- Ensure powered fork trucks don't push vehicle away from the docks.
- Conduct a complete vehicle walk-around before pulling away from the dock.



Trailer:

- Use mechanical restraints (blocks and wheel chocks) for ALL trailers being loaded or unloaded.
- Support the load and related material handling equipment with nose jacks. Note: Built-in nose jacks may not be strong enough for some loads.
- Support trailers (with movable tandem wheels) using jacks at the rear, or move the tandem to the rear, to ensure freight and trailer are stable for loading and unloading.
- Before working inside the trailer, check for hazards, including:
 - Broken planking
 - Holes
 - Unstable freight
 - Structural damage
- Use a minimum of 10 candlepower to light the trailer.
- Protect temporary lighting and cabling to prevent damage or shorts.
- Remove obstructions, debris, and unused blocking before loading the trailer.
- Brace heavy or unstable items inside the trailer to prevent shifting.
- Follow proper hazardous materials handling procedures.

Dock plates, Ramps/Gangways:

- Positioned between the loading dock and the trailer or railcar, a dock plate is used when loading and unloading. Dock plates are either manually-placed metal plates or hydraulic plates built into the loading dock. There's a lip on the edges designed to prevent mobile equipment from falling off.
- Use dock plates that are constructed to support at least four times the planned load, including both the freight and material handling equipment.
- Ensure dock plates are flush with the floor's surface to minimize movement and wear at the edges.
- Ensure dock plate is anchored before use.
- Identify any dock plate tripping points with paint or tape.
- Inspect hydraulic dock plates regularly, and document inspections. A certified professional must inspect the dock plate at least once a year.
- Check manual dock plates regularly for signs of wear (e.g., corrosion, cracking, or any failure of the material or welds).
- Use handholds or loops for the moving of the dock plates by forklift.

Other Good Practices:

- Develop and implement a Dock Safety Procedure. Include:
 - Mandatory vehicle shut off and key turn in during loading and unloading
 - Required driver behaviors expectations
- Communicate and enforce driver boundaries and designated waiting area.
- Develop a training program that includes periodically training dock workers on safety procedures and equipment.