Forklift Safety – Blind Spots Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. **Rear and Side Obstruction:** Blind zones behind and beside the forklift prevent operators from seeing pedestrians, especially during reversing or turning.
2. **Load Obstruction:** Large or elevated loads can block the operator’s forward view, increasing the chance of striking racks, people, or other equipment.
3. **Inadequate Use of Mirrors or Cameras:** Lack of visual aids like convex mirrors or backup cameras can worsen blind spot navigation and reduce reaction time.
4. **Poor Lighting or Visual Contrast:** Dimly lit or cluttered areas increase the severity of blind spot-related incidents as hazards become harder to detect.
5. **Pedestrian Traffic in Shared Areas:** Crossing paths with pedestrians in aisles or loading zones raises the risk of runovers due to limited visibility.
6. **Turning Corners Without Warning:** Blind intersections and tight turns without mirrors or barriers can cause head-on collisions or tip-overs.

STATS

- In 2023, 67 workers died in the US from incidents involving forklifts, order pickers, or platform trucks, with visibility issues like blind spots contributing to many pedestrian strikes.
- From 2021-2022, there were 24,960 days-away, restricted, or transferred (DART) cases due to forklift incidents in the US, often linked to obstructed views during maneuvers.
- In 2021-2022, 15,480 US forklift-related cases resulted in days away from work (DAFW), with blind spots exacerbating risks in pedestrian-heavy areas.

- Annually, US forklifts cause about 34,900 serious injuries, with pedestrian collisions—frequently due to blind spots—accounting for roughly 20% of cases.
- Approximately 70% of US forklift accidents, including those from blind spots at intersections and during loads, are preventable with proper training and equipment.
- In the US, 25% of recorded forklift injuries involve crushing pedestrians against stationary objects, often in blind spot areas like corners or doorways.
- In Canada, forklifts are involved in about 10% of annual workplace fatalities and 5% of serious injuries, with blind spots cited as a key factor in pedestrian incidents.