



Digitize, Automate Safety Toolbox Talks, & Save Time.

Topic: Narrow Aisle and Order Picker Safety

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Time: _____

Location: _____

Team / Department: _____

Talk Conducted By: _____

Navigating through narrow aisles while operating an order picker can feel a bit like a real-life game of Tetris. You need to be precise, aware, and cautious. The crunch of boxes and chatter of machinery in the background can make things feel a bit chaotic, but safety is our top priority. Today, we'll chat about some key safety tips and practices that can help keep everyone safe while working in these tight spaces.

Understanding the Risks

How do we define narrow aisle safety? Well, any area where machinery and personnel move swiftly can pose risks. The challenge with order pickers in narrow aisles is twofold: there's limited space for maneuvering and often limited visibility.

Common risks include:

- **Collisions:** either with people or products.
- **Tip-over incidents:** if an order picker is operated improperly.
- **Falling objects:** these can injure those below if not carefully handled.
- **Poor visibility:** making it harder to see obstacles or people.

Safety Gear Matters

Just like you wouldn't hop on a bike without a helmet, ensuring that the right safety gear is worn in the warehouse is crucial. This isn't just mandatory, but it's good sense.

Essential safety gear includes:

- **Hard hats:** to protect against any falling items.
- **High-visibility vests:** especially vital in narrow aisles where visibility can be restricted.
- **Steel-toed shoes:** they help to protect your feet in case of accidents.

Performing Pre-Operational Checks

Before hopping onto an order picker, it's important to ensure that everything is in good working order. Think of it like a routine check-up for your vehicle; it makes sure you're safe and ready to go. Here's what to look for:

Checklist for pre-operation:

- **Visual inspection:** Check for cracks, leaks, or any visible damage.
- **Control functions:** Ensure that all controls operate smoothly and respond as expected.
- **Battery check:** Make sure you have enough charge for downtime tasks.

Knowing Your Surroundings

It can't be stressed enough how important it is to know your surroundings. When operating an order picker in narrow aisles, awareness is key.

Here are a few tips to enhance your awareness:

- **Use mirrors:** Some order pickers come with mirrors to enhance visibility around corners.
- **Alert others:** Use your horn to signal while you are about to move, especially when approaching turns.
- **Stay on alert:** Keep an eye out for other workers and equipment in the area.

Proper Operating Techniques

Mastering the art of operating an order picker is like learning a dance. Each move has its purpose, and when done correctly, everything flows smoothly. Here are some operating techniques to keep in mind:

Techniques for safe operation:

- **Maintain a slow speed:** It's better to take your time than to rush through narrow spaces.
- **Keep forks low:** This lowers the center of gravity and decreases the chance of tipping over.
- **Scan ahead:** Anticipate turns and obstacles to prepare for any changes.

Loading and Unloading Safely

Getting products on and off the order picker safely is a big part of the job. Improper loading can lead to all sorts of dangers.

Tips for safe loading:

- **Distribute weight evenly:** Ensure that the load is centered, so the order picker remains stable.
- **Secure the load:** Use straps or whatever is available to hold items in place.
- **Don't overload:** Always adhere to the weight limits set by the manufacturer.

What to Do in Case of an Incident

No one wants to think about accidents, but preparation is key to safety. In case something goes wrong, knowing what steps to take can make all the difference.

Steps to follow:

- **Stay calm:** Panic can make things worse.
- **Assess the situation:** Determine if anyone is injured.
- **Report to management:** Make sure to notify supervisors so they can take appropriate actions.

Narrow aisle and order picker safety isn't just about following rules, but about cultivating awareness and creating a safe work environment for everyone involved. As you move forward, think of these safety tips not as checkboxes, but as part of a culture that we share as a team. Remember, safety is never an accident!

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