

PERSONAL INJURY POST

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It's Illegal to Break These Forklift Safety Rules

When you work in a warehouse, it's important not only to act safely but also to know that improper handling of your equipment — specifically a forklift for this article — can be illegal. These laws have been put in place by OSHA and the U.S. Department of Labor. Workplaces that do not follow or educate their workers on these guidelines are not fully compliant with the law. Here are just a few of the things you need to know about operating a forklift.

First, be knowledgeable about your equipment and cognizant of your surroundings. It's crucial to be constantly aware of what's happening around you. Whether you're a visitor or an employee, you may assume you're safe along the main walkways of a warehouse, but that's not always the case. For example, if you don't know the turning radius of forklifts near you, you may not realize you're in danger. By being aware of nearby employees and knowledgeable about your machinery, you can keep yourself and others safe.

More workplaces need to know that part of the responsibility of handling specialized equipment, like a forklift, is to make sure employees can legally operate it. If you're handling a forklift, you need to be certified — legally speaking, job training isn't enough.

Second, keep in mind that your forklift's carrying capacity doesn't tell the whole story. For example, the forklift might say it can carry up to 4,000 lbs., but the real capacity is much lower, especially with an irregularly shaped or uneven load. The way you place loads on the forks of a forklift is also crucial. The further you place it from the center, the more uneven it will be, and this will reduce the capacity. Being mindful of this will prevent your forklift from overturning and being unable to steer, which could seriously injure yourself or someone else.

Third, if you use extensions on the forks of a forklift, remember that this will reduce its load capacity. There are different kinds of forklifts, from sitting to standing. Some are meant for indoor or outdoor use only. Similarly, there are also many kinds of attachments for all types of forklifts, and you better be knowledgeable about the kind you're using. Some allow you to attach a basket and raise a person in the air. Not everyone realizes, though, that the higher you raise the fork, the less weight capacity the forklift has.



That can be very dangerous. We've had a case where a man was lifted 30 feet in the air, but improper use of the forklift led to him falling. He had devastating injuries, from bone fractures all over his body to a serious traumatic brain injury.

According to OSHA, forklift accidents that result in serious injury total 34,900 annually. OSHA also predicts that if companies implemented more stringent training policies, about 70% of forklift accidents in the U.S. could be prevented.

Safety is not optional. It's imperative that operators know how to legally operate a forklift in a warehouse or otherwise. Thank you for reading, everyone.

— Ric Garcia

IN DEFENSE OF RELAXATION

Why You Need to Take Your Vacation Days



If you're one of the 50% of Americans who would prefer a higher salary over paid vacation days, then the thought of relaxing by the pool probably makes your skin crawl. According to a 2019 Allianz Global Assistance survey, most Americans would only give up their vacation days for a 48% raise, but as Forbes reports, about 1 in 5 workers would only need a 24% raise to willingly fork over their vacation days.

The rise of what experts are calling "performative workaholism" is evident in the hustle-and-grind culture of working long hours, skipping lunches, working throughout the weekend, and taking very few breaks. But medical and psychological experts caution that addiction to the hustle comes at a price.

Recent evidence suggests that working long hours over extended periods of time actually makes you a worse employee. As exhaustion creeps in, your ability to complete even the most mundane or simple task decreases. In those moments, it's important to take a short break, but it's also vital to recognize when your body needs an extended refresher. This could make you better at your job. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Luxembourg, Ireland, and Norway have some of the world's most productive workers. Coincidentally, they also provide many vacation days.

So, what's great about taking a vacation? Experts at a Midwestern hospital system, Allina Health, report that stepping away from work for a short period of time can decrease your risk of heart disease, improve your quality of sleep, create a better mood, and boost your relationships. Researchers in the Netherlands even found that simply planning for and anticipating a vacation can improve your happiness level!

If you can't stand the thought of taking time off, you're not alone. More than 40% of respondents in a 2016 survey said they felt they couldn't take a vacation because there wasn't anyone to cover them. Communicate your concerns with your employer to find a compromise.

Start slow, too. Schedule a long weekend and pack your days with activities, like getting a massage, hiking, or traveling to a local destination. Look to travel sites like Expedia, Airbnb, and Travelocity for local deals and tips on the best vacation methods. Soon, you'll be the biggest advocate for taking time off.

SURVIVING THE CRASH

WHY TRAUMA AWARENESS MATTERS

Inside this issue, we discuss a case where a minor crashes into our client and their family and how important it is to educate your kids on driving safety. We also would like to talk about the importance of physical trauma awareness, especially for those like our client and their family after a severe accident.



WHAT HAPPENS IF A MINOR CRASHES INTO YOUR CAR?

Our driving skills are often informed by our parents. For more than a decade, we'll watch our parents at the wheel as they help guide us along our lives. By the time we drive ourselves, our parents' driving habits will seem like the "norm." This is why setting a good example for your kids is so, so important.

In some of our personal injury cases, our client is injured by a minor. What happens when your young teenager crashes into another



Our client wouldn't have survived without a trustworthy trauma system within their geographical area. But not everyone is so lucky. According to the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, trauma is the leading cause of death for individuals up to the age 45.

What is trauma in a medical sense? Physical trauma is a severe blunt, blast, or penetrating injury that's typically caused by car crashes, gunshots, knife wounds, falls, battery, or burns. When a serious traumatic injury occurs, the survival of the patient relies on the strength of the patient's local trauma system.

A reliable trauma system must provide:

- Immediate response and medical care at the scene of the injury
- Rapid transport from the scene to a qualified trauma medical facility
- Qualified trauma medical facilities capable of delivering immediate care and ongoing treatment for patients.

Why is it important to talk about physical trauma? "Excellent trauma care relies on an excellent trauma system," writes the American Trauma Society (ATS). If you have depression or emotional trauma, you typically have the ability to choose between therapists and treatment providers. However, when you're a physical trauma patient, you're limited to the trauma system that's available to you while trauma professionals are forced to make decisions in the most expedient manner possible.

ATS is an organization that helps trauma teams across the country excel at what they do. If you'd like to see them advocate for more trauma systems around the U.S., provide critical information about trauma to lawmakers, and continue to support injury prevention, then donate to ATS at **AmTrauma.org**. You can help make a difference in trauma systems near you and areas nationwide that need help most!

vehicle and causes life-changing injuries to another family? We had a recent injury case where such a nightmare became a reality.

Case Facts

In 2018, a 14-year-old driver and passengers were headed to a birthday party when they crashed into our clients. Our client's car, which included both parents and a minor, rolled onto the passenger side, and our clients sustained very serious, debilitating injuries. Recovery required multiple surgeries at a substantial cost.

In the lawsuit, the 14-year-old's father was held responsible for negligence in several ways, including allowing his son to drive the car, failing to properly instruct his son on how to try to control the UTV, failing to instruct his son not to give rides to passengers, and all other acts and/or omissions that may be shown at the trial.

Case Results

In the end, the family had to pay over \$1 million to justifiably compensate for our clients' family medical issues.

There are no winners in cases like this — it can cost you and your family your finances, your health, and possibly your lives to be careless about passing over your keys to your child.

The best thing you can do to prevent this scenario from ever occurring is to educate your children on the dangers of distracted driving and practice safe driving habits yourself. Remember that there's no such thing as being able to multitask — your brain can switch between tasks quickly, but not fast enough while on the road. Research shows that you can be mentally distracted for up to 37 seconds after sending a voice text.

Don't underestimate the dangers of the road, and talk to your family about responsible driving today!



Inspired by 101 Cookbooks.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup tightly packed spinach leaves
- 1 cup tightly packed kale leaves, stems removed
- 1 1/2 cups vegetable stock
- 2 tbsp full-fat coconut milk
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1/2 cup yellow onions, finely diced
- 1/2 cup green peppers, diced
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 cup long-grain white rice

DIRECTIONS

1. In a blender, purée spinach and kale with vegetable stock, coconut milk, and salt. Set aside.
2. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, sauté onions and peppers in olive oil until soft. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes.
3. Stir in rice and cook and toast for 1–2 minutes before adding the blended mixture. Increase heat to bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until liquid has evaporated, 15–20 minutes.
5. Remove from heat and let sit for 10 minutes. Fluff with a fork before serving.

BE INSPIRED

"LOVE YOURSELF FIRST AND EVERYTHING ELSE FALLS INTO LINE. YOU REALLY HAVE TO LOVE YOURSELF TO GET ANYTHING DONE IN THIS WORLD."

— LUCILLE BALL

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Bring Spring Indoors

The Most Beautiful May Flowers for Your Home or Office

The April showers came and went, so now we get to enjoy May flowers! You might not buy flowers for yourself often, but it's totally worth treating yourself and your visitors, all while supporting your local florist!

To start off, **anemones** are the most mythological May plant around because of two famous Greek myths surrounding these jewel-toned flowers. Anemones are said to have sprung from blood shed by the death of Aphrodite's lover, Adonis. The ancient Greeks also believed that the god of the west wind favored anemones — hence their second name, the windflower.

Attach them as pops of color to any bouquet for a classic, romantic, or modern arrangement, or mix them with roses and trailing greenery for a more boho look.

Carnations are also fantastic flowers to display in May. Some people may see carnations as a cheap flower, but, when used en masse, they can have a truly breathtaking effect in a room. Try using natural-colored carnations to create a fresh, contemporary space.

You can also freshen up the room with **sweet peas**, which have a wonderfully mild perfume. They come

with an enormous range of colors — one of the biggest ranges in the flora kingdom, in fact! Delicate, ruffled, and feminine, sweet peas are sure to delight anyone who sees them.

Lastly, although **tulips** or **orchids** would be classic choices for your arrangement, consider surprising your visitors with **lilies of the valley**. These beautiful, peaceful little blooms only grow in white, which is often seen as the color of renewal and innocence, and they wear it well! Their adorable little bell-like flowers will be sure to put a smile on your face.

We hope you will consider these gorgeous flowers for your space this year. A small purchase at your local small businesses can make a big difference, just like how a few flowers can make a big difference in your home!

