

ASSOCIATED *advantage*

PROVIDING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS WHICH CREATE SUSTAINABLE VALUE FOR
THE STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL OF INVENTORIES WITHIN THE
SUPPLY CHAIN

Implementing Environmentally Friendly Initiatives Can Lead to a Reduction in Operating Costs

Being eco-friendly is increasingly considered a social, political and economic advantage in U.S. business and industry; however, many times it is thought to be a more expensive method than the alternatives. Many businesses hesitate to adopt green practices because they fear it will hurt their bottom line and negatively impact profits. But many eco-conscious businesses discover that they can actually save money and bring in new customers who specifically patronize companies that actively make an effort to be environmentally friendly.

Sustainability is the key to saving money and being eco-friendly. It is the combined efforts that are practiced on a daily basis consistently that lead to substantial reduction of operating costs and less damage to our planet. Going eco-friendly is employing practices that will increase your company's profitability and help to save our environment at the same time.

For example, energy use is a large expense for many companies. Warehouses, distribution centers and manufacturing facilities use huge amounts of energy to run their equipment and light their facilities. Even offices, with their computers, printers, servers and other equipment, are consuming large quantities of energy, and by making savings in these areas, businesses can reduce their overheads while not affecting productivity.

Lighting is a good place to start. Many industrial companies have invested in energy efficient lighting thereby cutting their lighting energy expenses by 50% while increasing safety and productivity because this new technology provides a brighter light. Additionally, many offices keep the lights on during the day to ensure staff don't strain their eyes and can work effectively, but by replacing traditional lighting with energy-saving lights, you can reduce the cost of lighting by 30%.

Sustainability is not limited to the direct costs of business and industry. Savings can also be realized in indirect costs such as packing, transportation and other logistics considerations. Eco-friendly smart packages that reduce cardboard and filler save resources and money. Replacing gas-guzzling forklifts with energy-smart electric and motorized carts is another environmentally smart way to cut costs. Optimizing shipping loads and delivery strategies can result in significant cost savings given skyrocketing fuel prices.

Implementing a sustainable supply chain also eliminates or reduces the amount of money spent on disposal of harmful by-products, scrap and adherence to regulatory issues. In many instances, by-products previously disposed of as waste are now generating viable revenue sources for environmentally-conscious companies. Sustainability is already being used as a competitive advantage by many companies who have found it a profitable way to grow market share in their industry.

There is no downside to going green. It is a good business practice that saves you money, saves the planet and will result in your bringing in more of the green.



Benefits of Renting a Forklift

When is Renting Right For You?

In today's ever-changing economy with strict budgeting limitations it may not be cost effective to purchase a new forklift or even repair older existing equipment. By taking advantage of forklift rental programs, you can use the capital you have earned and apply it to other areas of your business.

Rentals are ideal for:

- Supplementing your existing equipment for seasonal requirements, when you're conducting physical inventory or when replacing trucks for scheduled repairs.
- Maximizing equipment use to help you better manage capital costs when right-sizing your fleet
- Establishing the value of equipment before purchasing or leasing to ensure it best fits your needs
- Special projects and short term needs
- Meeting emergency equipment needs when changing to multiple shifts or waiting for delivery of new equipment.

A forklift is an expensive piece of equipment and the maintenance can also be quite expensive. So for a company that only uses it for a few hours a day, or for a period of time whether it be short or long term that has a definite end date, renting is ideal.

Additionally, a rental payment is fully deductible as an operating expense for tax purposes. This also gives companies the flexibility to switch assets as different needs arise.

Remember that when renting a forklift, you need a qualified forklift operator to operate the machine. It may seem that one can save on costs by using staff members who are on hand, yet this is not advisable since an untrained person can cause serious damage to the equipment or cause accidents or death if there is not experience in using a forklift. So it is best to remember to calculate the cost of hiring a trained forklift operator into the overall cost of renting the forklift.

If you are looking for the short term benefits of using a forklift without the long term responsibility of maintaining the equipment then renting a forklift is the best option for your business.



Maximize Your Investment...

By Making Your Battery Room OSHA Compliant



Every warehouse or plant that uses electric forklifts on site will have a designated room or area where batteries are stored. However, not every area is in compliance with OSHA standards, which creates two key problems. Besides jeopardizing employees' health and safety, poor maintenance can also lead to minimizing the life of a battery, which costs between \$3,000 and \$6,000.

Among the biggest mistakes at warehouses is not having the proper maintenance tools on site to clean up leaks or spills. Every day, batteries need to be topped off with water to keep their plates moist and operate efficiently. If accidentally overfilled, both the water and sulfuric acid inside the battery spill over.

Sulfuric acid will destroy the floor and even soften concrete over time. Worse yet, it will burn through an employee's clothing and possibly cause serious burns and other related injuries, such as infection.

If a spill occurs, the solution is to sprinkle a neutralizing acid absorber on the sulfuric acid. The powder acts like cat litter by soaking up the spill. Despite its effectiveness, many warehouses don't keep this product on site.

Sometimes, sulfuric acid can splash on an employee's face or body. Warehouses must have eye wash stations that are less than 25 feet from the battery room or area, according to OSHA. The stations usually consist of a shower or water fountain with two streams, enabling both eyes to be rinsed out at once.

Many employers also store protective gear in their eye wash stations. This includes face shields, goggles with side shields and an acid resistant apron and gloves, which are often included in a kit.

By creating a compliant battery room or area, you will ensure employee safety, maximize the life of batteries and improve your warehouse's overall efficiency.

Safety Corner

Lift Truck Pre-Shift Inspections

Performing a pre-shift lift truck inspection is one of the most important parts of an operator's job. Rushing through an inspection or not conducting an inspection at all could result in the operator overlooking serious problems with the lift truck causing it to be unsafe. Operating unsafe equipment could result in serious injury or death to the operator or other co-workers.

OSHA requires that all lift trucks be inspected at least daily before being put into use. If you are operating your lift trucks around the clock, then they must be inspected at the beginning of each shift. Contrary to what many people believe, OSHA does not require these inspections to be kept in writing. However, it is strongly recommended that employers document all inspections. If inspections are not documented, it will be very difficult to track and prove that they were completed. It is also essential that all operators know how to properly conduct a pre-shift inspection of their lift truck, and having an actual "checklist" will help ensure that operators know what to inspect.



The pre-shift daily inspection consists of both a visual inspection and an operational inspection. The visual inspection, sometimes referred to as a pre-start inspection, should be conducted with the key in the "off" position. This inspection requires the operator to inspect a number of items such as:

- Tires
- Battery
- Guards / Covers
- Indication of Oil Leaks

After completing the visual inspection, operators should always conduct an operational inspection with the key in the "on" position. This inspection includes:

- Horn
- Steering
- Lift Lower System
- Braking
- Directional / Speed Control

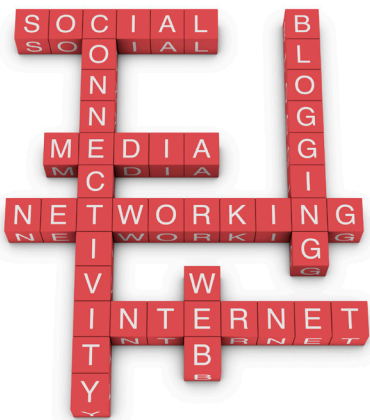
In addition to the items listed above, other items may need to be checked depending on the on the type of lift truck. It is also important to keep your lift truck in clean condition free of excess dirt, oil, or grease so that all warning labels and safety decals are visible.

If any lift truck is found to be in need of repairs, it should NOT be driven and should be taken out of service immediately. Any problems found should be documented properly and reported to a supervisor.

To download a free copy of an Operator Checklist visit: www.associated-solutions.com/edge

Want More Edge...

The Conversation Continues on Social Networking



Associated is excited to announce that we have officially launched our Social Networking pages on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook!

To take advantage of all the benefits that Social Networking has to offer, we have established the following accounts that we plan to keep updated to provide you with continuing education on the material handling industry.

LinkedIn – www.linkedin.com: To follow us, please search under, Company: Associated and click "Follow Company"

We have also created an Associated Group. This group will feature a continuation of the articles in the Associated Edge Newsletter. Becoming a member of this group will allow you to add commentary on featured articles, ask questions or just view what other industry professional are saying. To join this group, please search under, Group: Associated Advantage and click "Join Group"

Twitter – www.twitter.com: To start following Associated, please search for "@AssociatedUSA"

Facebook – www.facebook.com: To "Like" our page, please search using "Associated" and remember to recommend this page to your contacts.

Our goal is to use Social Networking in order to provide our readers with up to the minute education information on the topics that interest you and your company. Make sure to join our Social Networking site to gain that extra Edge!

ABOUT ASSOCIATED:

Celebrating over 50 years of providing customers with innovative solutions that create sustainable value within their supply chain, Associated has become a leader in providing reliable, cost effective material handling equipment, systems and support that optimize space, increase customer productivity, enhance safety and reduce costs. Featuring leading edge engineering and fleet management services to complement industry leading sales, service, rentals and parts, Associated has been the recipient of multiple awards in recognition of being a premier organization in the material handling industry.



Innovation • Sustainability • Reliability



ADDISON, IL



INDIANAPOLIS, IN



FORT WAYNE, IN



BLOOMINGTON, IL



EAGAN, MN



ANKENY, IA



ASSOCIATED
133 North Swift Road
Addison, IL 60101-1447



Do You Know...

HOW MUCH YOUR LIGHTING IS COSTING YOU?

By switching to more energy efficient lighting, warehouses and distribution centers can cut their lighting costs by 50% or more while improving safety and productivity.

Warehouses also have a great opportunity to save more by using occupancy sensors in the rack aisle ways.