



## Electric Forklift Catches Fire

**Incident Description:** On 10/22/2019 a Saddle Creek Associate was loading a trailer when he smelled smoke. A second Associate working nearby saw flames coming from the first operators forklift and radioed the fire into leadership. Once alerted, leadership immediately evacuated the facility by pulling the fire alarm, then proceeded to extinguish the fire with a fire extinguisher. The building was evacuated until the “All Clear” was announced.

**Root Cause:** A thorough inspection by a service technician revealed that the main electric cable, going to the motor, became loose and overheated. The excessive heat ignited the cable and started the electrical fire.

### Preventing electrical fires on forklifts:

#### Operators:

- If an unusual smell is identified, immediately park and tag the forklift out until it can be checked by a technician
- Perform good pre-shift inspections and ensure all visible wiring is free from damage
- When charging, ensure all wiring between charger and forklift is free from damage AND properly connected

#### Facility Leadership:

- Ensure that electrical wiring is checked on each preventative maintenance visit, by the forklift technician
- Ensure preventative maintenance is being performed at the frequency recommended by the manufacturer
- Keep charging areas properly ventilated; it is recommended all locations fan their battery charging areas to create an appropriate amount of air flow to effectively displace built up hydrogen fumes. Follow this link for an example of a large, effective ventilation fan: [Ventilation Fan](#)

SAFETY ALERT