



Safety Awareness for handling trash boxes

Forklift trash boxes help control trash on jobs, but they must be handled only by trained, certified, and authorized operators. Before use, the forklift and trash box/dumpster must be inspected and documented to confirm they are structurally sound, properly secured, and safe for the task. A poorly planned move can tip equipment, spill debris, strike workers, or create caught-in/between hazards, especially around other trades, unstable terrain, power lines, high winds, or poor weather.

Before starting, confirm:

- Operator is trained, certified, and authorized; equipment is company-owned or approved rental
- Forklift and trash box/dumpster inspections are completed, documented, and free of structural defects
- Safety chain/lock, horn, backup alarm, and required safety devices are working
- Route is reviewed for traffic, other trades, power lines, unstable terrain, weather, and struck-by/caught-in hazards
- Outside-company equipment is reviewed with Marek safety leadership before use
- Cut-resistant Level 3 gloves are worn when handling drywall, metal studs, or sharp scrap
- Operator and ground crew communicate before moving, raising, or dumping the box

Loading the Box

- **Load low and balanced:** Place heavy scrap at the bottom, keep the load even, and do not pile debris above the top edge where it can shift, fall, or blow out.
- **Use the box only for trash:** Never use it as a platform, saw table, ladder, step, or work surface.
- **Control sharp edges:** Bend down or remove protruding screws, sharp metal studs, or other items sticking past the box perimeter.

Moving the Box

- **Secure and inspect before travel:** Confirm the box is seated on the forks and secured with the chain, locking pin, or approved device. Verify the backup alarm, horn, and required safety devices work.
- **Travel low and controlled:** Keep the trash box low—about **4 to 6 inches**—while moving. Raise it only when positioned to dump.
- **Plan the route:** Avoid struck-by and caught-in/between hazards, including traffic, other trades, floor openings, cords, debris, ramps, unstable terrain, and power lines.
- **Communicate and alert others:** Use the horn and backup alarm as needed. Stop and communicate before entering shared travel paths or congested areas.
- **Watch wind and weather:** Do not move or dump the box if wind, rain, poor visibility, or other conditions could cause loss of control or debris falling.
- **Stay clear of pinch points:** Keep body parts away from forks, latches, hinges, casters, dumpsters, walls, and other equipment.

Unloading the Box

- **Set a clear drop zone:** Confirm no one is near the dumpster, trash chute, or discharge area before releasing the latch.
- **Do not fight stuck debris:** Never climb under, stand besides, or reach into an elevated box. Lower it and use long tools with proper gloves.
- **Let falling material go:** Move away if debris shifts or falls. Never try to catch or stop a moving load by hand.
- **Protect stability:** Do not operate near power lines or on terrain that could jeopardize machine stability.

After Use

- Report any incidents, equipment damage, or unsafe conditions to your supervisor immediately, and notify the General Contractor of any site hazards as required.
- When finished, park the forklift and trash box in a designated safe area, lower the forks, shut the machine off, remove the key, and secure it to prevent unauthorized use. At the end of the shift or day, lock the equipment if applicable.