

Visual Fatigue: Lighting, Glare and Worker Performance Picture This



This image shows a forklift operator on the third hour of a night shift in a high-bay warehouse. Most of the overhead lights are working, but the strip above the loading aisle has been out for two weeks. The operator's eyes have been bouncing between bright dock doors, dim shelving, and the glowing screen on the lift's display for hours. They have stopped blinking. They are rubbing their eyes between turns. Coming out of the bright dock area into the dim aisle, their pupils have not adjusted. A pallet jack operator steps across the aisle – and is one second too slow to be visible.

Visual fatigue does not announce itself. The eye does not warn you it is missing things, the warehouse does not stop being busy because the lights are dim, and the job does not stop being dangerous just because you have done it a hundred shifts. One operator squinting into a dark aisle, one missing fixture, one second of slow reaction – and a routine pick becomes a fatality investigation. Maintain lighting to standard and report outages the moment you see them. Reduce glare with shielded fixtures, anti-reflective screens, and clean lenses. Take regular eye breaks – 20-20-20 – and rotate tasks during long shifts. Tell your supervisor when fatigue or glare are affecting you. The aisle does not forgive a tired eye.