

For immediate release

See and be seen: The Koehler Group raises awareness among employees about the limited field of vision of forklift operators

- **Due to the way they limit fields of vision, forklifts pose a risk of accidents that pedestrians and operators should be aware of**
- **Showing blind spots visually makes the problem very clear**
- **The goal: “zero accidents” at the Koehler Group**

Oberkirch, 03/09/2023 – At the Koehler Group, the shared occupational health and safety goal is simple: “zero accidents.” In order to achieve this goal, the company’s employees are made aware of a variety of important issues. This includes seeing and being seen when working together day to day, and that is particularly the case when it comes to interacting with forklifts. These powered industrial trucks move very quickly on small traffic areas, transport heavy loads, and limit the field of vision of their operators. In order to illustrate the corresponding risk, a forklift has been installed at the company’s parent site in Oberkirch and floor markings have been used to illustrate its blind spots.

How well can a forklift operator see?

While pedestrians have their entire field of vision at their disposal, forklifts significantly limit the field of vision of their operators as a result of their operator cab and lifting elements. And even though the design and mirrors on newer fork lifts keep becoming increasingly sophisticated, there are still blind spots that need to be taken into account. In order to be able to better gauge these risks and prevent accidents, it was important for the Koehler Group to raise awareness of the issue among its employees. To this end, unmistakable red floor markings were painted next to a forklift at the Koehler site in Oberkirch. These markings clearly illustrate how a forklift operator’s field of vision is limited and what their blind spots are. Under the motto of “What do you think I can see?”, employees can now get an idea and even experience what their field of vision would be like when in a forklift. “Our goal of zero accidents is something we can only achieve together. That’s why it’s so important to look out for and pay attention to each other and put ourselves in other people’s shoes every once in a while,” points out Bernhard Bonath, the Head of Occupational Health and Safety at the Koehler Group.

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Caption: The field of vision of forklift operators is extremely limited, which the red bars on the ground clearly show. *Image rights: Koehler Group*

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About the Koehler Group

The Koehler Group was founded in 1807 and has been family-run from that moment to the present day. The group's core business activity lies in the development and production of high-quality specialty paper. This includes—among others—thermal paper, playing card board, drinks coasters, fine paper, carbonless paper, recycled paper, decor paper, wood pulp board, sublimation papers, and also innovative specialty papers for the packaging industry since 2019. In Germany, the Koehler Group employs around 2,500 people across five production sites, with three additional sites in the USA. The group operates internationally, with an export share of 70% in 2021, and brings in an annual turnover of around 1 billion euros.

As an energy-intensive company, Koehler invests in renewable energy projects such as wind energy, hydropower, photovoltaics, and biomass with its Koehler Renewable Energy business unit. The Koehler Group has set a goal of producing more energy from renewable sources by 2030 than is required for its paper production operations.

In addition, with its Koehler Innovative Solutions business unit, Koehler is dedicated to developing new business areas outside of special paper production and energy production.

Find more information at: <https://www.koehler.com>

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