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Electric Forklifts: The Myths vs. The Realities

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Used and Rental Material Handling and Aerial Lift Equipment

You already know there are numerous reasons to "Go Green," but you may have heard that electric forklifts don't give you enough power. They take forever to charge. And they cost more. Kensar Equipment is here to dispel these myths and give you some facts. This way, you'll be able to judge for yourself if an electric lift truck is right for your needs. If it is, you can call Kensar Equipment for your used or rental needs and we'll help you find the right model for your operation.

Myth #1: Internal Combustion Forklifts Came First

Actually, the electric forklift was developed before the gasoline-powered industrial tractors like Towmotors came along. And, electric lift trucks have come a long way since the early days with more powerful motors, more efficient designs and significantly improved batteries.

Myth #2: Electric Lift Trucks Don't Have Power

Today's electric forklifts give you plenty of pick-up and power. You can find electrics that easily handle up to 14,000 lbs. of lift capacity. They have fast acceleration, travel speed and lift speed. In addition, their capacity ratings and stability can be better at high lifting heights because electric forklifts have a lower center of gravity.

Myth #3: Electric Forklifts Are Expensive to Buy and Operate

If you consider the lifespan of the purchase, this one is false. Although the initial cost and the battery may make the purchase slightly more, there are two reasons an electric industrial truck will cost less over the long run: 1) Savings in Maintenance, and 2) Savings in Fuel.

The electric lift truck has been engineered for reduced maintenance. Electric lift trucks don't have internal combustion engines, transmissions or radiators. Without all these complex systems and parts, just think how much easier the maintenance will be. Here's a sample comparison from Kensar Equipment:

Maintenance Cost Comparison of Electric vs. Internal Combustion Forklifts:

	5,000 LB Elec	5,000 LB LPG
Annual Labor:	34hrs	45hrs
Annual Cost of Parts:	\$844	\$1,672
Labor Cost (est) \$78/hr	\$2,652	\$3,510
Total Annual Maintenance	\$3,496	\$5,182

Potential Annual Maintenance Savings with Electric: **\$1,686**

As for the savings on fuel, this gets harder to pin down every day with the cost of fuel wildly fluctuating. On thing's for sure, you save significantly, and will save more as time goes on because the cost of fossil fuel products is steadily rising and it is not predicted to ease.

In an article from January 2, 2011 on www.WarehouseIQ.com entitled "Electric Forklifts Cost 50% Less to Operate" they state:

As a result of the rise in oil costs, the data suggests Electric lift trucks are 20 – 50 % less in costs per month to operate than fossil fuel drive vehicles today. This savings is immediate and is seen from month one ... The volatility of the fossil fuels contributes so greatly to the monthly vehicle cost that a small change, such as a few cents per gallon, dramatically affects the monthly costs.

Myth #4: Electric Forklifts Take Too Long to Recharge

Battery technology has changed dramatically in the last few years. We are no longer tied to batteries that must charge for 8 hours, then cool for 8 hours. New “rapid-charge,” or “fast-charge” and “variable frequency” charger technologies allow operators to return an 80% discharged battery to a full state of charge in about 2 hours. And now that most batteries operate on AC, you get higher productivity. AC maintains performance as voltage drops from the battery, and modern batteries also have a longer run-time. Overall, you’ll get improved efficiency from your lift truck.

Now that we’ve talked about the myths, let’s talk about the realities of the advantages to owning electric lift trucks provided by Kensar Equipment, which are numerous.

The Advantages of Electric Forklifts:

- Zero emissions/No consumption of fossil fuels
- Dramatically lower fuel costs
- Lower maintenance costs
- Longer vehicle life span
- Ability to operate inside and outside
- Reduced noise levels
- Fewer waste fluids to dispose of (no engine, transmission or coolant fluids)
- Improved operator ergonomics through reduced heat, fumes, noise and vibration
- Eliminates on-site fuel storage which reduces liability issues
- Turning radius specs are better than IC lift trucks
- With a used electric forklift from Kensar Equipment, the purchase price of the forklift is even more affordable

Now that you have the facts, maybe it’s time to look at some used electric lift truck models. Kensar Equipment has a 6-acre facility in Indianapolis off I-465 with an average of 200 used industrial vehicles ready for rent or sale. We also offer affordable shipping all over the nation.

When you call, you’ll talk to either myself, or Mitch Wallace. We’re two owner-operators who are determined to find the equipment you need. We aren’t tied to any specific brand, so we’re free to find the equipment that will perform the best for your particular job. If we don’t have what you need in stock, we have contacts across the country to locate what you need. Just call Kensar Equipment at 888-272-0601 or visit www.kensar.com.