



South Dakota High Demand & High Wage Career

**Career Cluster: Transportation,
Distribution & Logistics**



Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators

Standard Occupational Code 53-7051

What They Do

Operate industrial trucks or tractors (such as forklifts) equipped to move materials around a warehouse, storage yard, factory, construction site, or similar location.

Is This For You?

Work Interests are described in the following categories (compatible with Holland's Model). People who tend to succeed in this career are:

Realistic (Doers) — Prefer to work with objects, things, machines, tools, plants or animals. They have mechanical ability, enjoy being outdoors and working with their hands.

Conventional (Organizers) — Detail oriented and organized. They like to analyze data, keep financial records and do research. They can be counted on to be accurate and enjoy structure and closure.

Work Values are aspects of work that are satisfying to you. The following work values are generally associated with this career.

Relationships — Allow employees to provide service to others and work with co-workers in a friendly non-competitive environment.

Support — Offer supportive management that stands behind employees.

Independence — Allow employees to work on their own and make decisions.

Abilities reflect a person's aptitude to acquire skills and knowledge. The following abilities are important for success in the career.

- Control Precision
- Multi-limb Coordination
- Far Vision
- Response Orientation
- Manual Dexterity
- Rate Control

Basic Skills You Need

- Operation and Control
- Operations Monitoring
- Coordination
- Equipment Maintenance
- Time Management
- Troubleshooting
- Active Listening
- Reading Comprehension
- Critical Thinking
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Monitoring

Education & Training

Industrial truck and tractor operator positions generally require a high school diploma or an equivalent. In many cases, training is done on the job, including safety procedures and guidelines.

Recommended Levels* for the National Career Readiness Certificate

Applied Math	3
Workplace Documents	3
Graphic Literacy	3

*Using the median skill level.

Where They Work

The South Dakota industries which employ the largest number of industrial truck and tractor operators are:

- Warehousing and Storage
- Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods
- Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods
- Building Material and Supplies Dealers
- Farm Product Raw Material Merchant Wholesalers

South Dakota Employment & Wages

2022 Employment	2032 Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Average Annual Openings	Annual Median Wage	Annual Average Wage
1,676	1,854	178	10.6%	188	\$45,590	\$46,340

Additional References

Labor Market Information Center

www.dlr.sd.gov/lmic

Career OneStop

www.careeronestop.org

O*Net Online

www.onetonline.org

mySkills myFuture

<https://www.myskillsmyfuture.org/>

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. U.S. DOL funded. For details, see dlr.sd.gov/lmic/eta_grant.aspx.

Printed on recycled paper. 

Provided By

Labor Market Information Center
South Dakota Dept. of Labor and Regulation
605.626.2314

Visit dlr.sd.gov/hotcareers to obtain the most recent workforce data and trends and more resources, including this document. Also available are explanations of the terms used in this occupational profile.



July
2025