

Information Bulletin

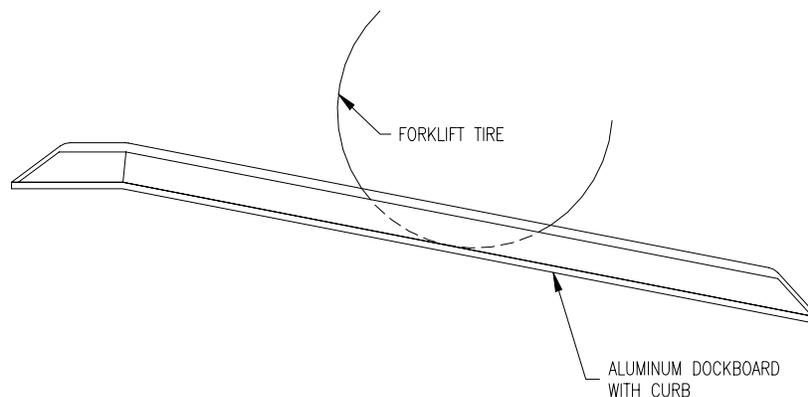
Common Dock Board Concerns

It has been brought to our attention that there is a concern regarding the benefits of all aluminum dock boards versus dock boards with bolt on steel curbs. The purpose of this information bulletin is to clear up any doubts regarding the benefits of an all aluminum dock board versus a dock board with steel bolt on curbs.

In our opinion there is a fundamental flaw on dock boards with bolt on steel curbs. As a load is driven across the board with the bolt on curbs there is a certain amount of flexing between the plate and curbs. Even under normal use the bolts are continually moving within the countersunk holes in which they are mounted. Since the bolts are made out of the harder material you will find that the aluminum, because of the friction, will gradually be worn away to the point that the steel curbs begin to loosen up. Tightening the bolts will only temporarily solve this problem as the same action/reaction continues to occur.

The significance of this problem is that should a forklift strike the curb with a glancing blow the bolts could shear, knocking the curb entirely off the plate to which it is mounted. Since most customers will not continually tighten the bolts on the curbs this could occur within a very short period of time.

With a B & P dock board, we have captured the best of both worlds by offering an all aluminum board with steel bolt on legs, which actually helps to increase the life of the board, and can easily be replaced if broken or reversed for refer truck applications. In addition, our proprietary tread plate, in combination with the welded curbs and steel legs enables us to offer an exclusive 2 year warranty at prices that are competitive to steel curb boards.

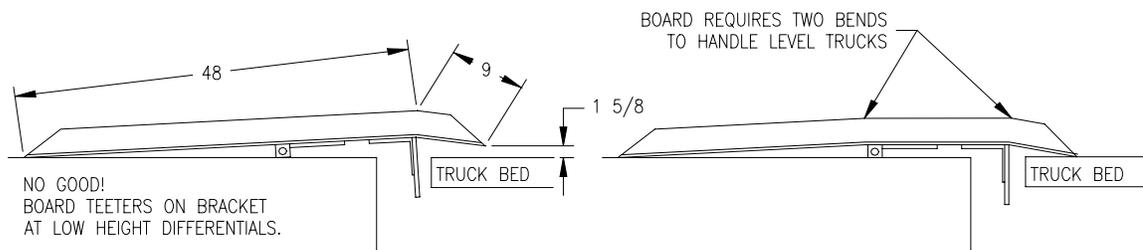


Important: Dock boards with steel bolt on curbs do not hold up nearly as well as a dock board with an aluminum curb welded the full length of the board.

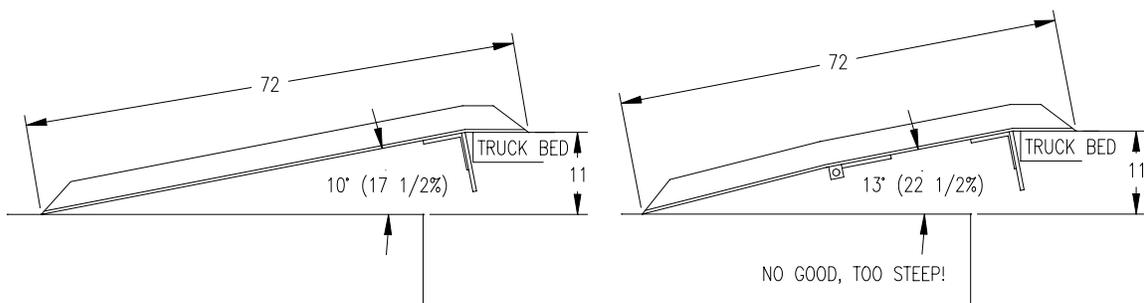
Lifting Loops vs. Lift Chains

As you are aware a steel dock board weighs significantly more than those made from aluminum. As such steel dock boards cannot be handled easily by hand. Lift chains is the most common method of handling a dock board, however the drawback to these is the fact that it takes two people to use them, one to drive the forklift and one to hold the chains off the floor of the board so the forks of the truck can get under them. In addition, many feel that the chains get in the way and make the handling of dock boards longer than 78" very difficult.

Because of this many people prefer to purchase lifting loops, however these also have limitations. Lifting loops are attached by brackets to the underside of the dock board and stick down from the board 1.75 inches. The brackets make it necessary for the board to have two bends in it, in order to handle trucks, which are level with the dock (see below).

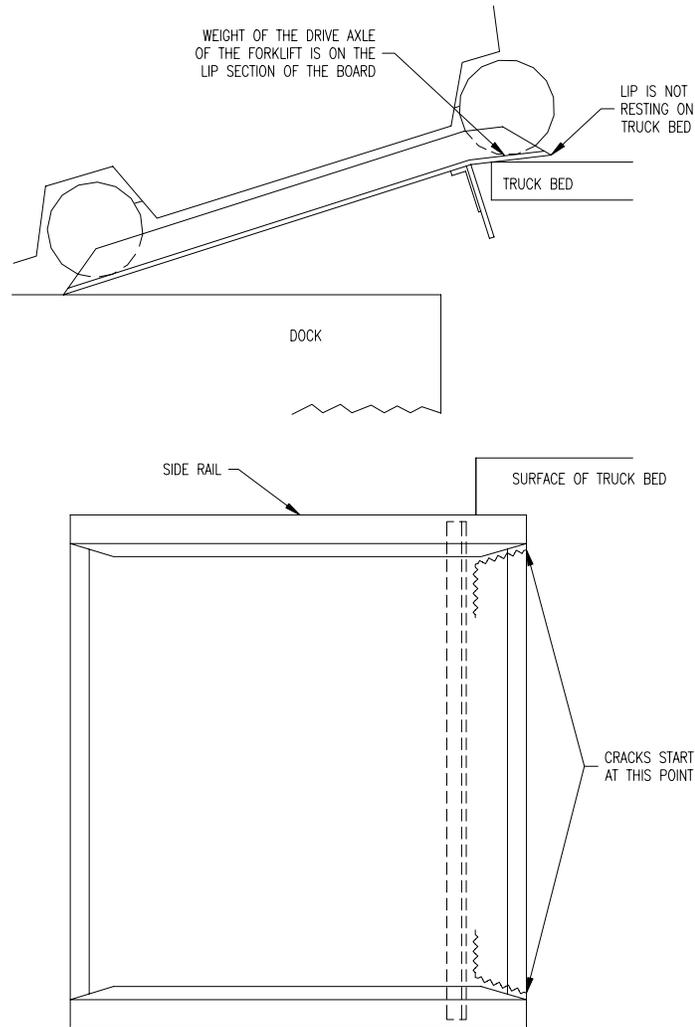


Having two bends in the board requires the board to be longer in order to handle the same height differential as a board that only has one bend (see below).



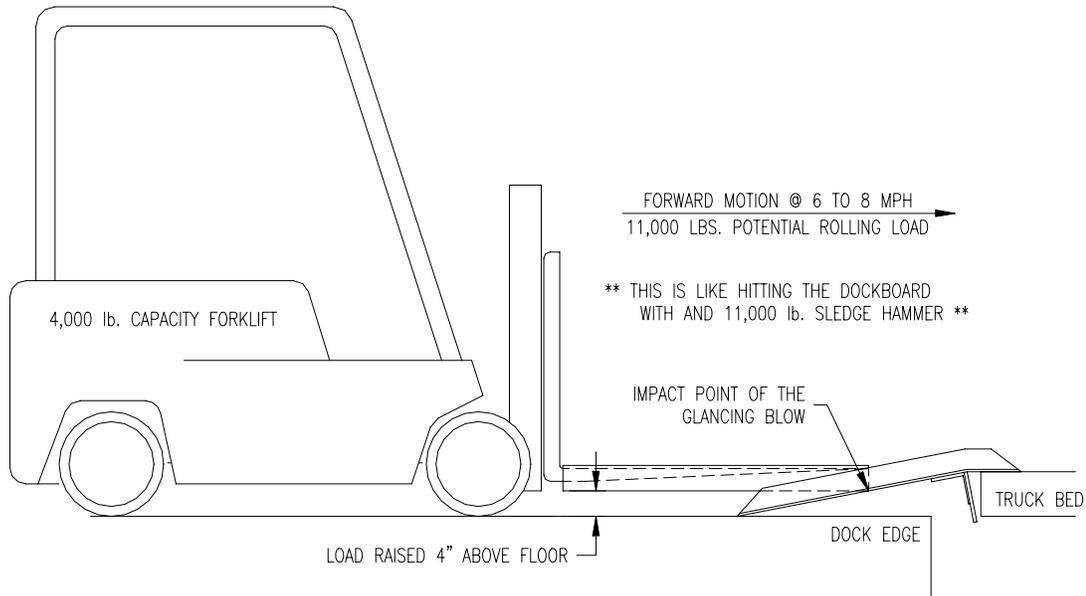
Know Your Maximum Height Differential

Over time using a dock board that is too short for the height differential, will cause the board lip to crack (see below). Dock boards are designed so that the lip rests flat on the truck bed at the specified highest height differential. As such, we highly recommend when ordering a dock board, that you specify a model that is designed to suit the maximum height differential of your application.

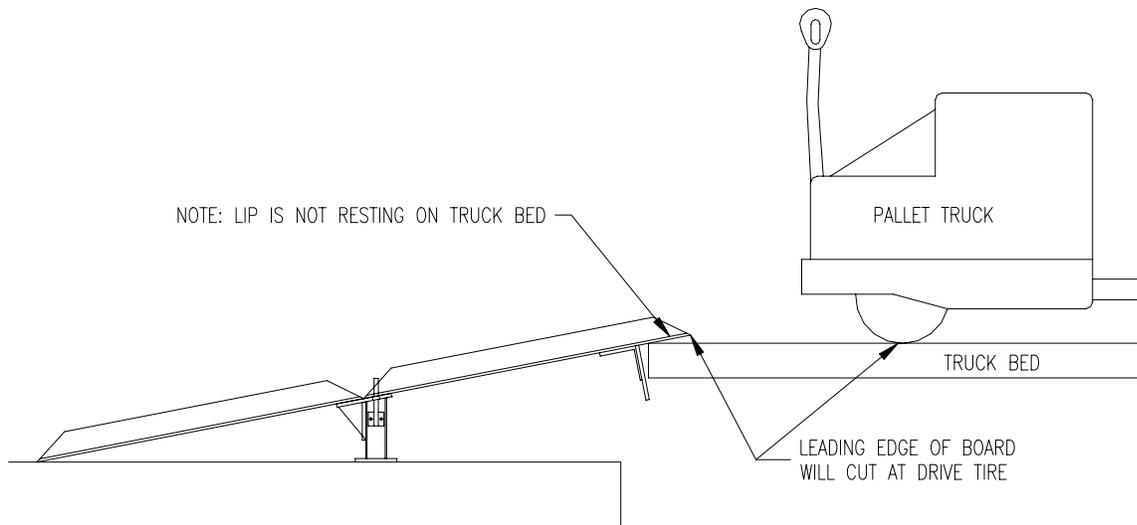


Other Common Dock Board Concerns

Board Clearance: Neglecting to raise the forklift load above the dock board will result in damage to the board. Common signs of dock board damage caused by this action include: a gouged or worn tread plate surface, gouges in the side rails of the board, bent or broken locking legs, and the separation of the side rails from the tread plate.



Board and Ramp Combinations: Using a dock board and ramp combination that is too short to service a height differential creates the potential for an accident. Continuously running a fork truck under these conditions will eventually cause the board and ramp to fatigue and crack. In addition, because the board and ramp are too short the lip will not rest flat on the truck bed surface as is pictured in the below diagram.



Other Common Dock board Concerns Continued

Damage to the pallet truck may occur as the raised edge of the improperly used dock board can puncture the drive tire of the pallet truck. Once the weight of the pallet truck is transferred to the dock board it can also cause the opposite end of the board to separate from the locking pins. Should the dock board separate from the locking pins this poses a great potential for an accident.

