

# Essential Loading Dock Terms to Know as a Loading Dock Manager

*Provided by Sylvester's Maintenance & Mechanical... Your Source for Everything Dock & Door.*

As a warehouse manager, you spend a great amount of time in and around your loading dock. Rightfully so as the loading dock is typically the hub of all warehouse activities with vehicles, forklifts, drivers, inventory, and company personnel constantly moving in and out.

## COMMON LOADING DOCK AND DOOR TERMS

The loading dock drives revenue for your entire organization. It is especially important the loading dock area is always safe, efficient, and properly maintained to prevent unnecessary loading dock shut-downs. Overhead Doors & Pedestrian Doors should operate efficiently, Ramps & Dock Levelers, and Safety Lighting should always be maintained for maximum productivity and visual safety.

Below are many common loading dock terms that can help you keep your loading docks fully functional and operating at maximum capacity and safety.

## LOADING DOCK

The loading dock is a bay or a series of bays in a warehouse or facility where trucks are loaded and unloaded, which can be located on the building's exterior, flush with the building, or fully enclosed.



## HIGH-SPEED OVERHEAD DOORS

A high-speed door is a type of industrial dock door that increases productivity, safety, energy efficiency, and security in your warehouse. High-Speed doors can operate at speeds up to 100 inches per second.

High-speed loading dock doors tend to require less maintenance than other types of industrial doors and are available in many varieties for specific applications. This type of loading dock door is ideal for warehouses that are looking to stay climate-controlled, cold storage, or minimize ongoing maintenance.



## **SECTIONAL & ROLLING STEEL COILING OVERHEAD DOORS**

A sectional overhead door is made of door sections that move within tracks with roller assemblies. They typically include insulated panels and operator systems and are efficient for most standard loading docks where High-Speed Doors are not needed.



A Rolling Steel Coiling Overhead Door is a metal slatted door that rolls up above the dock opening.

## **LOADING DOCK LEVELER**

A Loading Dock Leveler is a manually, hydraulically, or electrically operated steel plate, located at the dock entrance, which can be raised and lowered creating a bridge to accommodate varying trailer floor heights. Your loading dock will not perfectly match the height of every truck that enters it, which can create gaps that are a safety hazard while loading or unloading trucks.

Loading dock levelers effectively close these gaps, keeping your employees and loads safe regardless of what size truck is at your loading dock.



## **LOADING DOCK LEVELER CAPACITY**

Loading dock levelers can hold 25,000 to 80,000 pounds of capacity. It is important to specify the proper Loading Dock Leveler for your loading dock operations.

## **DOCK BUMPERS**

A dock bumper is used to prevent damage to loading dock equipment, dock walls, dock openings, warehouse walls, vehicles, and trailers. Dock Bumpers are typically made of rubber for their high resistance to impact and environmental wear and tear from natural weather elements.

## **DOCK BARRIER LIP**

A Dock Barrier Lip is an optional safety stop for forklift trucks preventing them from accidentally or prematurely driving over the dock's edge when loading or unloading. When it is safe to unload a

truck, the dock lip will automatically flatten when the leveler descends onto a truck, offering a smooth, safe transition between the dock leveler and the truck to be loaded or unloaded.

## **DOCK SEALS**

A Dock Seal is a rubber or canvas covering that extends out from a dock face to seal the gap between the dock and the trailer's entrance. Dock Seals are designed to create a barrier that keeps outdoor weather, bugs, dirt, rodents, and unwanted pedestrian traffic out of your warehouse while loading and unloading.

Dock Seals also keep climate-controlled air inside making your warehouse more energy efficient and providing comfortable working conditions for your employees.

## **DOCK SHELTER**

A dock shelter is the flexible enclosure that allows a trailer to pull under and into the opening of a loading dock while the surface of the fabric forms a contact barrier around the rear of the trailer.

Loading dock shelters fit more loosely around the trailer than loading dock seals, so they tend to last longer and be more forgiving to truck drivers.

## **DOCK SAFETY LIGHTING**

Dock Safety Lighting are functional lights that activate when a tractor-trailer truck locks onto a warehouse dock. These safety lights help prevent accidents and injuries and help prevent forklifts from falling off docks or departing trucks.



## **COMMUNICATION LIGHTS**

Communication Lights inform truck drivers, forklift operators, and warehouse employees when loading or unloading is in progress. These safety lights establish a clear line of communication between all dock personnel reducing the risk of an accident.

## **EDGE OF DOCK LEVELER (EOD)**

The EOD bridges the gap from the edge of a loading dock area to a truck, trailer, or ramp. They are fixed to the loading dock and ideal for use when trucks are backing up to a loading area.

## **DOCK LIGHTS**

Dock Lights ensure that operators can see while they are inside dark trailers to load and unload safely.

## **DOCK SAFETY GATES & DRIVER CAGES**

Dock safety gates and driver cages guard the pedestrian walkways and provide security in and around the loading dock and overhead dock door area.

## **WHEEL CHOCK**

A wheel chock is a sturdy wedge placed closely against a tractor-trailer's wheels to prevent it from accidentally moving during loading and unloading of the tractor-trailer.

## **GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT (GVW)**

The GVW is the combined weight of the material handling equipment (lift truck, pallet jack, etc.) and the load. In other words, it is the total maximum weight moving across the dock leveler.

## **HOLDOWN**

A mechanical, electrical, or hydraulic device that holds a dock leveler at a set height above, at, or below dock level.

## **HEIGHT DIFFERENTIAL**

This is the difference between the highest truck height and the dock height.



## **VEHICLE CREEP**

The movement of a transport vehicle away from the loading dock caused by the transfer of momentum as an industrial truck decelerates when entering the vehicle and accelerates when exiting the vehicle. Uncontrolled trailer creep may allow the lip of a dock leveler to become unsupported and create a dangerous gap between the transport vehicle and the dock.

## **VEHICLE WHEEL OR TRAILER RESTRAINT**

A vehicle restraint that engages one or more wheels of a transport vehicle, thus inhibiting uncontrolled movement of the vehicle away from the dock structure. Also known as Vehicle or Trailer Restraint.

## **WORKING RANGE**

The horizontal and vertical range of positions of an RIG that can be engaged by the vehicle restraint.

# DOES YOUR LOADING DOCK AREA MEET OSHA REGULATIONS?

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