

Clark

The History of the Gas Forklift

The Clark Equipment Company made the very first gas powered forklift during the early 20th century. Clark has led the business in gas-powered forklifts ever since that time.

Beginning

Located in Buchanan, Michigan State, the Clark Equipment Company was the maker of the first Tructractor during the year 1917. Employees fabricated the tractor to make it easier to move components within the plant. When visitors came to the plant and saw the machine, they asked Clark to make more. The following year Clark sold eight Tructractors, and the year after that Clark began the Clark Tructractor Company in Buchanan, selling 75 of the machinery that year.

Duat

In 1923 Clark made a gas-powered tow tractor. Called the "Duat," this three-wheeled equipment later developed into the modern gas-powered forklift.

Improved Models

A gas-powered tow tractor with four wheels and could draw up to 5,500 kilograms, the Clarktor was developed in 1927. During 1928 the Tructier model was manufactured. It became the basis for a modern line of gas-powered forklifts.

Forklifts that run on diesel, gasoline, liquid propane or liquid natural gas have internal combustion engines. These type of forklifts must be refueled either at on-site fueling stations or with gas canisters. Internal combustion forklifts cost much less to buy, but more to operate due to the fuel cost. For loads which are more than 6,800 kilograms, an internal combustion forklift is suggested.