

## Lifting Safely

Most of us have heard the basics of proper lifting techniques. We are told to bend at the knees and not with your back and to keep your back straight. While many of us have heard these techniques, the procedures may not always be practical. However, if we keep a few common elements in mind, we may be able to limit the possibility of injury.

Review your work tasks. Take a few moments to review the lifting tasks you are about to perform. If you identify any hazards, try to eliminate them or reduce them to a comfortable degree. Determine if there are mechanical lifting devices or if there are other employees that may assist you. If you work alone, evaluate the work area and determine the best approach to limiting the hazards you face.

Look for slip and fall hazards. Many back injuries are the cause of the employee slipping and falling. Housekeeping, ladders, or stairs should be reviewed. If there is mud, water, oil or other substances that are a concern, clean the area up before you begin work. While many jobsites are muddy or have hazards that are not easily controlled, being aware of these hazards and taking precautions to limit the hazards may prevent an injury.

Work at a steady pace and wear appropriate footwear. Take a look at your shoes. If they are worn, do not have a slip resistant sole, or are not appropriate for the work environment, you may need to change your footwear. Employees that are in a rush frequently take short cuts or fail to recognize a hazard that leads to their injury. If your footwear is in poor condition, working at a fast pace may only make the matter worse.

Don't become complacent. After an injury occurs, many employees state that they never thought the injury would happen to them. You are not immune to the possibility of injury. If you are concerned with your lifting exposure, consider the following guidelines when attempting a lift:

- Squat by bending at the hips and knees. Keep your head, shoulders, and hips in a straight line.
- Your feet should be shoulder-width apart and turned out slightly.
- Bend your back to a comfortable degree and try to maintain its natural curves and posture.
- Let your legs do the lifting

Lifting, carrying, and unloading safely means:

- Stand close to the load
- Keep a wide stance, and make sure your footing is solid
- Tighten the stomach muscles
- Pull the load close to the body
- Move slowly, with small stable steps
- Don't twist the body when carrying
- When unloading, lower the load slowly using your legs, not your back

Remember: Don't try to lift anything too heavy for you to handle and certainly consider alternative methods to move the object such as getting help or using mechanical devices.

### Attendees:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Location:**

**Supervisor:**

**Date:**

*This safety tip was brought to you by, . . .*