

2008 Monthly E&H Campaign: February

Proper Lifting Techniques

Monday, 11th

Whether you're at home or at work proper lifting techniques are critical to back safety. In construction, 25% of all work related injuries are associated with back trauma. Approximately, 1 of every 100 construction workers suffer back injuries on the job, resulting in discomfort and decreased productivity. Back injuries can lead to permanent physical damage, negatively affect quality of life and possibly end your career. Most of these injuries are to the lower back and can be attributed to poor lifting techniques.

Preplanning

Back injuries can be eliminated by proper planning. Before you lift any object (box, equipment, tools, etc...) consider your options. If you cannot lift the object yourself, ask for assistance from a coworker or use a mechanical device such as a dolly or a handtruck.

If you determine that a mechanical device is not necessary, use the following techniques to accomplish your task:

Proper Lifting Techniques "Lift with your legs, not with your Back"

1. Before lifting and carrying an object, make sure your route of travel is clear of obstructions, slip and trip hazards, etc...
2. Squat to lift and lower. Do not bend at the waist.
3. Be sure to have a solid grip equally supporting the entire mass of the object. Also make sure you can see over the object you're carrying.
4. Keep your lower back bowed in while bending over.
5. Keep the weight as close to you as possible.
6. Keep your lower back in and raise up with your head first.
7. If you must turn, turn with your feet, not your body.
8. Never jerk or twist!
9. Put the weight down by keeping your lower back bowed in.
10. Keep your feet about shoulders width apart and staggered if possible.
11. Wear shoes with non-slip soles.



Not all back injuries result from lifting one single object. It is important to adhere to the proper lifting techniques whenever you need to lift and move objects.

Resources:

[OSHA- NATION'S NUMBER ONE WORKPLACE SAFETY PROBLEM](#)

[US Army Lifting Techniques Training Program](#)

[Back Safety & Lifting Techniques](#)

Visit the Communications E&H website for more information.



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