

GENERAL INFORMATION: Manual material handling of most objects is simple and safe. However, objects that are heavier than normal, awkward to handle, obstruct one's view, or have special handling considerations require special attention and pre-planning.

TYPICAL ACCIDENTS: Typical accidents include employees lifting heavier objects than they can handle, dropping objects because of an unsecured grip, losing a secure grip because of carrying the object too far, striking against or tripping because of an obstructed path of travel and using sudden jerking motions when lifting because of underestimating the load to be lifted or by being in a hurry.

PREVENTATIVE STEPS:

1. Determine the weight of the object and evaluate the need for assistance. **THEN GET THE ASSISTANCE!!**
2. Review the path of travel and ensure that it is free of obstructions and that the immediate area has no tripping hazards that you might step on or against.
3. "Test" the object to be lifted to determine the impact of its weight and awkwardness.
4. Pivot at the feet rather than at the knees when twisting motions are involved. This will put less strain on the knees and reduce the potential for a serious injury.
5. Get help when handling objects that obstruct your view.
6. Have a plan of what to do if an object starts to slip. **THINK AHEAD!!**
7. Lift objects in a smooth motion rather than in jerking or sudden motions.
8. Carry lighter loads more frequently rather than a single load to get the job done quicker.

GENERAL CONTROLS:

1. Stack heavier items at waist level whenever possible.
2. Use mechanical lifting aids whenever possible.
3. Keep paths of travel free of obstructions and slippery surfaces.
4. Repackage objects into containers that are easier to handle where possible.
5. Check for protruding objects, sharp edges, splinters, etc. prior to lifting or carrying the object.

IMPACTING CONDITIONS: Changes in floor surfaces, inappropriate footwear, employee fatigue, physical condition and/or capability of the person doing the lifting, time constraints, and environmental considerations such as rain, wind, mud, etc.