



Manual Material Handling Tips

The CompWest Difference

CompWest customers are assigned a dedicated loss control consultant to identify and address loss trends while serving as a safety resource.

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 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 the weight of the load was underestimated.

Preventative steps:

- 1) Determine the weight of the object and evaluate the need for assistance.
- 2) Review the path of travel and ensure that it is free of obstructions.
- 3) Test the object to be lifted to determine the impact of its weight and awkwardness.

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- 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 action if an object starts to slip.
- 7) Lift objects in a smooth motion rather than in jerking motions.
- 8) Carry lighter loads more frequently, rather than a single, heavy load 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
- Fatigue
- Physical condition and/or capability of the person doing the lifting
- Time constraints
- Environmental considerations such as rain, wind, mud, etc.

For more safety tips and information, visit CompWestInsurance.com.

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