



SAFETY INCENTIVE PROGRAM
950 Keynote Circle, Suite 10
Cleveland, Ohio 44131-1802
Telephone (216) 398-9860
Fax (216) 398-9801

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SIP TIP: LIFTING PROPERLY

One out of every four work injuries result from material handling. But you say that's not a part of your job. The trouble is that many of those who are injured get hurt because of the LIFTING, PUSHING/PULLING, when it's NOT a part of their job. So go easy on the heavy work.

Whether it's a part of your job, or not, sooner or later you're going to have to lift something. So you may as well do it right.



First . . . look at what you're lifting. If the load has sharp edges, slivers, protruding nails or is slippery, you should know about it before you hold it in your hands. Find out how heavy it is. Check the footing to be sure that the floor is clear. Now you're ready to lift. Bend your knees, keep your feet apart, and get a good grip. Lift by straightening your legs with your back vertical, so that your strong leg muscles do all the work.

When you carry a load, watch where you're going. Don't skin your knuckles at doorways and tight places. Don't try to change the position of a load while you're carrying it. Set it down or rest it against some object, and then readjust your grip. You set it down the way you picked it up - by bending your knees, with your back straight up and down, but don't set it on your hands. Put down one corner of the load first and then slide your hands away. That's the way to get it from there to here.



To lift a load shoulder high or above your head . . . first lift it waist high, rest it on a support and change your grip. Then bend your knees to get added power for the big push. Lots of objects, like lots of people, have strange and assorted shapes. Sacked materials should be grasped by diagonal corners and swung to the shoulder with a boost from the knee. Drums or barrels should be rolled with your hands against the sides. Grasping the ends with your hands can mean crushed fingers - using your feet can mean crushed toes.



Take a long hard look at a load before you lift it. If it's too heavy or bulky, get someone to help you. It's quicker, easier and safer. Long objects, regardless of weight, should be carried by two or more persons when possible, walking in step. If you handle it alone, keep the front end as high as possible. Long objects can easily sway up and down or sideways, and it's not hard at all to smash someone's head or a window.

**REMEMBER: IF YOU GET HELP BEFORE YOU TRY TO LIFT SOMETHING,
YOU WILL NOT NEED HELP AFTERWARD.**

The Construction Industry Service Program will be presenting an OSHA 500 class September 30 – October 3, 2003. For information call the CEA/CISP office (216-398-9860).