

Toolbox

Safety Series



MANUAL HANDLING OF MATERIALS

The best way to handle boxes and cartons is to grasp the opposite top and bottom corners and draw the object close to your body before lifting. Long materials, such as pipe and lumber, should be carried over a padded shoulder, front held high to avoid hitting other employees. Special caution should be used when turning corners. Rolling heavy round objects, such as drums and barrels, requires considerable skill. Special training and devices should be used for these items.

Use the proper tools for opening containers. Hammers, chisels, and pry bars should be periodically inspected.

Considerable hand protection can be gained by wearing work gloves. They can prevent many cuts and scratches, and many types of gloves will also give you a better grip. Most work gloves are ventilated for comfort.

Sometimes we tend to pile things too close to a wall or column. Proper clearances at the top and sides of piles are necessary. Stacks should be set in a steady condition. Materials must be crisscrossed or interleaved to prevent movement. Rolling objects should be chocked. Allow enough clearance for lighting, sprinkler piping, and air circulation.

Tripping and slipping hazards should be cleared away. Cleaning crews should keep floor conditions free of potential hazards.

Injuries resulting from lifting are a continual problem both on and off the job. Most of us know that we should crouch close to the load and then use the leg muscles to lift. After the lift has been made, it's important to turn correctly while carrying an object. Don't twist your body. Turn by shifting your feet, or by taking short steps. Be sure there are no obstructions or slippery spots on the travel route. For large objects, have two equal sized people carry the object.

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LEADER NOTES

Objective: To review the concepts of manual handling of materials.

Potential Injuries: Back strain – Resulting from overstretching, improper twisting, or tying to lift an object whose weight or shape is beyond one’s capacity.

Hand Injuries – Resulting from hands being caught on material containers or the materials themselves.

THE TALK – POINTS TO COVER

- Lift cartons by grasping opposite top and bottom corners of the container.
- Use your legs and not your back whenever you are doing any lifting.
- Long items should be carried over a padded shoulder, front end held high.
- Use handling devices to move barrels and drums.
- Use proper tools to open material containers.
- Hand protection, such as work gloves, should be used.
- Property stack materials. Keep piles steady, away from walls and columns, and keep rolling objects chocked to prevent movement.
- Keep floors clean and clear of slipping and tripping hazards.
- Use proper lifting techniques.
- Don’t twist your back to do any turning. Shift your feet or use short steps instead.
- Watch for slippery spots on the travel path.
- To lift objects, use two people and have communication between the workers.

