



Material Handling

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions on the job site.

A Manual Handling Operation is any transporting or supporting of a load, including the lifting, lowering, putting down, pushing, carrying or moving, by hand or by bodily force. Picking up and carrying a toolbox or a step ladder or even picking up a ream of paper or a stationary box, is manual handling, just as unloading and positioning a cable drum might be. Anything from the extremely light to something requiring your maximum strength is included.

Manual Handling accounts for a large number of accidents each year and many millions of "days off" are due to back and other injuries. Once someone's back has been weakened by injury it is often a recurring problem for the rest of that person's life.

All Manual Handling Operations are governed by the Manual Handling Operations Regulations. Operatives have a duty to make full and proper use of anything provided by their employer to reduce the risk of manual handling injury. This includes following any advice and training given of lifting etc.

Key Points to consider are:

Basic Rules for Safe Manual Handling

- ✓ If you don't need to lift it manually, then don't, use the equipment available.
- ✓ Think before lifting! Is it heavy, large or awkward? Where is the centre of gravity? Can you manage it alone?
- ✓ Use the strong muscles and bones of your legs, not the complex and vulnerable ones in your back.
- ✓ Make sure you have a firm grip of the load and that you can sustain the grip for the duration of the lift. Wear industrial gloves to improve grip and protect hands from sharp edges.
- ✓ Make sure you know where you are going to put the load and that the way is clear of obstacles and not slippery. The load must not impede your forward view.
- ✓ If in doubt, get help! There's nothing macho about a slipped disc!

Lifting Technique

- ✓ Tuck chin in. This keeps back as straight as possible and therefore less vulnerable.
- ✓ Feet as close to load as possible, about a hip width apart, one foot slightly in front.
- ✓ Bend the knees and crouch down.
- ✓ Take a full grip, using palms, not fingertips.
- ✓ With elbows tucked in, straighten the legs, lifting smoothly.
- ✓ Carry the load forward at waist height.
- ✓ Change direction by turning on your feet, not by twisting the trunk.
- ✓ Put down in the same careful way and continue being careful as you straighten up.

Toolbox Attendance

Questions? _____

Concerns? _____

Days since Last Incident: _____

Supervisor/Meeting Leader: _____ Date: _____

Signatures of attendees:

Manager review comments:

Manager signature: _____ Date of Review: _____