

Common Job Hazards

Slips, Trips, and Falls

Slips, trips, and falls commonly cause many debilitating injuries. By maintaining awareness of basic conditions and with a little diligence, these injuries can be prevented. Here are some basic preventive measures:

Maintain safe work areas

- Keep floors clean, swept, and in good repair.
- Remove clutter and obstructions from walkways, stairs, etc.
- Keep work areas in a basic state of cleanliness and orderliness.
- Keep cords, cables, air hoses, etc. out of walkways.
- Keep drawers closed.
- Maintain guardrails around stairs, floor openings, etc.
- Maintain adequate lighting.
- Keep areas dry and clean or place warning signs on wet or slippery surfaces.

Always work in a safe manner

- Wear sturdy nonskid shoes with flat heels.
- Avoid clothing that is too loose.
- Walk, don't run.
- Use care walking on stairs, dock edges, openings, etc.
- Walk slowly on slippery surfaces. Slide your feet if possible.
- Block off unsafe areas.
- Wipe rain, snow or mud off of shoes/boots.

- Use a ladder to reach high places.
- Ensure proper training in the safe use of ladders. (see Volume 3 Safety Training Modules: Ladder Safety)
- **Document all safety training for all staff (use form P-106)**
- Immediately report slippery surfaces, broken stair treads or damaged floors to your supervisor and take appropriate measures to abate the hazard to ensure nobody sustains a preventable injury.
- Don't carry a load you can't see over and never lift anything that weighs more than 50 pounds without help or other tools such as a hand truck.

If you do fall:

- Roll with the fall.
- Bend elbows and knees.
- If possible use legs and arms to absorb the fall.
- Seek medical attention if necessary, and notify your supervisor immediately.
- Complete a Workplace Accident / Workplace Hazard form (A-262) and submit to the EH&S Program as soon as possible.
- Identify the cause and abate the hazard (if applicable) immediately.

Common Job Hazards

Safe Lifting and Back Care

Back injuries are the most common and severe on-the-job injury.

All employees are expected to make a commitment to safe and proper lifting at all times.

1. Causes of back problems

- Incorrect lifting techniques, such as bending the back to lift
- Sudden bending, twisting or sudden strain on generally unused muscles
- Poor physical condition, overweight, etc.
- Poor posture
- Lifting with tight muscles caused by stress and tension

2. Pre-planning lifts

- ✓ Is the weight within your normal ability? 50 pounds is the maximum weight allowed. **NEVER lift more than 50 pounds without help or other tools such as a hand truck.**
- ✓ Can you divide the load into more manageable parts?
- ✓ Where will you grip it? Where are you taking it? How will you put it down?
- ✓ Is the pathway clear? Identify potential tripping hazards, etc. (Slips, trips and falls are among the greatest contributors to back injury).
- ✓ If the load is above you, get a stable platform near to lift from.
- ✓ When several people are to be involved: plan the lift and transport, and decide who will guide.

3. Safe Lifting Techniques

- Before lifting, loosen muscles with a few gentle bends and stretches. This is especially important if there has been a period of sitting or inactivity.
- Keep your feet shoulder width apart, with one foot slightly ahead of the other.
- Get close to the load before lifting it. This way you can use your legs and keep the back in a straight position.
- Use your leg muscles, not your back. Bend at the hips and knees.
- Maintain good posture. Keep back straight, chest out, shoulders back, and maintain the curve in the lower back. (*Preserve the curve!*)
- Tense up the abdominal muscles just before the actual lift.
- Turn with your legs and feet to change directions; never twist your back.
- Be careful not to lean and stretch to pick up an object.
- Use hand trucks or dollies when appropriate.

4. Using tools

- Shoveling:
 - Use the leg muscles for most of the work. Avoid strain on the back.
 - Keep the shovel close to the body. Try to avoid reaching out for loads.
 - Turn with your legs and feet rather than twisting the back.
- Using digging bars, post hole diggers, etc.
 - Use the leg muscles rather than back muscles.
- Axe and pick work:
 - Keep legs flexible and slightly bent. Most of the movement should be with arms and legs.

5. Other techniques

- Push, don't pull heavy objects.
- When standing for a long time, try to keep one foot on a raised surface.
- Reach for high objects by using a ladder rather than stretching or leaning for them.
- Use mechanical help like hand trucks, or other equipment when practical.
- Sit straight with feet on floor knees slightly higher than hips.
- Bend knees when working low or lying on the back.
- Get help with heavy loads.
- Do exercises/stretchches for the back.
- Place heavy objects on tables so you don't have to bend over to lift.

6. If you do injure your back

- Rest to keep the injury from worsening
- Apply ice (in a towel or plastic bag) to reduce swelling
- Seek medical attention if necessary.
- Report your injury immediately to your supervisor
- Complete the Employee Accident/Workplace Hazard Form (A-262) and submit to the EH&S Office as soon as possible.

Common Job Hazards

Basic Fire Information

1. Fire precautions

Electrical:

- Replace wires when insulation is worn.
- Use correct fuses.
- Check ground connections on cords.
- Don't overload circuits.
- Don't use temporary wiring.

Explosive Vapors:

- Some vapors that are heavier than air can travel distances and explode. Examples are propane and gasoline. Keep gasoline and other flammable liquids in approved containers and approved flammable storage lockers.
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Space Heaters:

- Be sure it is approved for use.
- Keep away from flammable liquids.
- Portable units should be attended while in use.

Housekeeping:

- Dispose properly of oily rags.
- Do not store incompatible substances together.
- Be extremely careful with welding sparks, etc.

Smoke / Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors:

- Check monthly for batteries and proper operation.

Flammable storage:

- Use flammable storage lockers.
- Use approved containers.

2. Fire Control Equipment

Fire extinguishers:

Classes:

A: For combustibles like wood or paper

B: For flammable liquids and gas

C: For electrical wiring and equipment

ABC: For combination fires

D: For combustible metals like sodium or magnesium

How to use fire extinguishers:

- Pull pin.
- Stand back about 8 feet.
- Squeeze trigger.
- Only lasts 3-20 seconds - use short bursts.

*****KNOW THE LOCATIONS OF ALL FIRE EXTINGUISHERS***