

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## TOPIC C127: LIFTING & CARRYING

Every year back injuries account for hundreds of thousands of workplace incidents. Most of these are caused by poor lifting and carrying techniques. If the injury is serious, it can require extended physical therapy or even surgery to correct. Let's review the safe lifting practices you should use.

**When preparing to lift:**

- Center yourself close to the object being lifted with feet shoulder width apart
- Bend at your knees and squat down, keep your back as straight as possible and make sure you have a good, firm grip on the object before lifting
- Keeping your back as straight as possible, hold the load close and lift it by standing up. Use your large leg muscles, not the small ones in your lower back. Carefully reverse the process while setting a load down

**Before using the lifting method described above, follow these guidelines:**

- Use mechanical aids when available to assist in lifting. The assistance provided by cranes, forklifts, dollies, hand-trucks, hand-carts and wheelbarrows will reduce your risk of lower back strain
- Before lifting and carrying a load, determine what needs to be lifted, how heavy it is, and where it's going. Can you handle the load by yourself, or will you need help? Is the item large and bulky, or small and heavy? Will it block your vision while you're carrying it?
- Don't over-estimate your ability or under-estimate your load, know your limitations. When possible, break down large loads into smaller ones
- How is the item packed? Are there any sharp edges or corners on the load? Large, heavy objects with smooth surfaces may be better handled without gloves, otherwise, use hand protection

**Before moving a load, evaluate your route:**

- Carefully examine the surface and footing conditions along the path you'll take while carrying the load
- Look for any areas that are smooth, slippery, uneven or rough. Watch out for ditches, trenches, bridging, step-ups, step-downs, ramps, doorways, stairways or objects that could pinch you
- Before moving an object, remove all possible trip hazards
- When carrying a load, use footwork to turn; don't twist at the waist

**Good communication is needed when doing a team lift to move objects:**

- Designate one person to give instructions and follow his/her lead. Good directions are: "Ready? 1-2-3-Up!" or "Ready? 1-2-3-Down!"
- Determine the load's weight distribution, especially when team members are walking and carrying backward
- When use extreme caution lifting loads overhead, always wear a hardhat when doing overhead work
- Get help when needed, and look out for loads that can shift. Low lifting tasks are exceptionally hard on the back, remember to bend at the knees rather than the back
- Always push a load rather than pull it

**Conclusion:** Think through each lifting task before trying to lift or move something that's too heavy and/or awkward to handle. Think about the best way to handle a load, and don't be shy about asking for help or waiting for a mechanical aide to do the lift. Use your legs properly to save your back. Back injury prevention is the goal.

**Employee Attendance:**(Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)


These guidelines do not supersede local, state or federal regulations, and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.