

CHAPTER 44

LIFTING TECHNIQUES

INTRODUCTION

Back safety awareness and safe lifting guidelines are necessary due to the prevalence and severity of back injuries throughout all industries. Backs can be injured by improper lifting, falling, stretching, overextending, and other workplace mishaps. Of these, using improper lifting techniques (as in hand-loading and unloading activities) are the largest single cause of back pain, strain, and injury. To reduce the incidence of back injury, the Company had instituted, and all Company employees will be trained in, the following proper lifting techniques (procedures) and other back safety measures.

POLICY

HTS AmeriTek requires these procedures to be followed to provide a safe working environment, and to protect the health of all our employees. The Company has implemented these procedures on safe lifting practices to ensure that all employees are trained to protect themselves from the hazards of improper lifting practices.

The effectiveness of the back safety procedure depends on the active support and involvement of all employees. The following points outline safe and proper lifting techniques that will be taught to all employees to minimize their risk of back injury and pain. Lifting remains an important function despite the level of mechanization found in the workplace today, so attention must be directed toward safe lifting

WORKSITE EVALUATION

A worksite evaluation for each job should be conducted which considers criteria such as, how much weight must be lifted and how often must it be lifted. This evaluation includes the number of times during the shift the employee must bend over or bend down, the amount of physical fatigue in the job, as well as the number of actual lifts.

The awkwardness of the work should be evaluated for situations such as whether the work is overhead, extended reach, repeated twisting, prolonged working on concrete or steel surfaces, prolonged standing or sitting or otherwise working in one fixed position.

REDUCING THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BACK INJURIES

The availability of hoists, dollies and other lifting or material handling equipment should be considered where practical. Work station redesign, such as providing tables or benches to place tools and work equipment at waist level reduces the number of stoops and bends required to pick up these materials from the floor during a work procedure

Tool racks are very helpful for storing tools, chains, ropes and other commonly used items at a comfortable retrieval level rather than having to stoop over to pick them up from the floor. The simple adjustment of height for work machinery or work stations may also be very helpful in relieving stress to the back which can be caused by an uncomfortable work elevation.

RULES FOR PROPER LIFTING

All employees of HTS AmeriTek will be trained in, and expected to adhere to, the following lifting techniques when they are required to perform any lifting activity as part of their job duties. When required to perform lifting activities, Company employees are expected to:

SIZE UP THE LOAD BEFORE LIFTING

Test by lifting or pushing a corner of the object. If it's heavy or feels too clumsy, get a mechanical aid or help from a coworker. When in doubt, Company employees are expected to obtain help and to never attempt lifting alone.

BEND THE KNEES

Bending of the knees is the single most important aspect of any lifting activity. When performing a lift, Company employees shall:

- Place feet close to the object, and center their body over the object.
- Get a good, firm handhold.
- Lift straight up, smoothly, and let legs do most of the work.
- Avoid overreaching or stretching to pick up or set down an object.
- Avoid twisting or turning of the body once the lift has been made.
- Make sure beforehand that a clear path is available to carry the object.
- Set the object down properly, keeping the back straight at all times.
- Always push, not pull, objects when possible.
- Change the lifting situation if possible to minimize a lifting hazard.

ADDITIONAL LIFTING (LOADING AND UNLOADING) EXPECTATIONS INCLUDE:

- If the object is too long or awkward, Company employees are required to get help.
- Splitting the load into several smaller tasks to achieve manageable lifting weight.

AVOIDING LIFTS FROM BELOW THE KNEES OR ABOVE THE SHOULDERS BY USING MECHANICAL AIDS

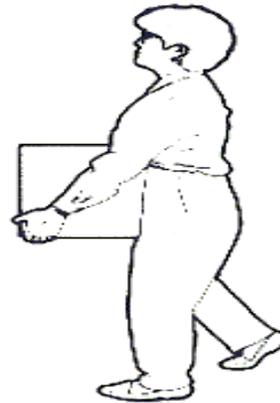
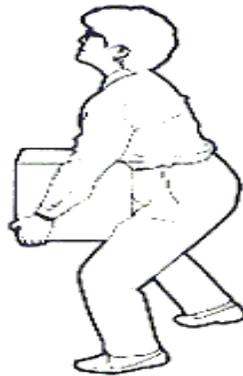
- The employee should evaluate the load to be lifted and (1) determine if the weight is reasonable and (2) whether the positioning of the item to be lifted is awkward. A determination should be made regarding the employee's own limitations, including whether the employee is tired and whether the back is currently healthy enough to safely lift and carry the load.
- Evaluate the floor surface for oil, grease or trip hazards and the location where the load will be moved. This will help to assure safe foot work and eliminate twisting or unusual movements of the body.
- The employee should stand close to the object to be lifted with feet spread comfortably apart and one foot placed slightly forward.
- The employee should squat down and straddle the load somewhat. The back should be kept straight and the knees should be bent.
- The object should be grasped firmly while a breath is drawn which inflates the lungs and helps to support parts the back.
- Lift with the legs. It is important to lift the object naturally and comfortably while keeping the bottom out and the small of the back slightly arched inward. Hold the object close to the body during the lift. Lift the object straight up to a comfortable standing position before walking or turning.
- Particular care must be taken to avoid injury when participating in lifting or carrying loads with groups of employees. One member of the group should give signals so that everyone will work in unison.

LIFTING OVERHEAD

The maximum load you can lift is less because you cannot use your legs. Spread your feet with one slightly in front of the other. Use a sturdy ladder when possible to remove the overhead activity.

LIFTING HEAVY OBJECTS

If an object weighs more than 50lbs. or if the item is too bulky or awkward you should get others to help.



-
1. Squat down and keep your back straight and your knees bent.
 2. Grasp the object firmly with a sure grip that won't slip.

3. Breathe in so your lungs will help support your spine.
4. With a smooth motion slowly lift with your legs.

5. Lift your back to a vertical position.
6. Hold the object close to your body.



-
8. Tighten stomach muscles to support your spine and keep your back up right.

9. Avoid twisting. Instead turn your leading foot 90 degrees toward the direction you want to turn.

10. Bring the lagging foot next to the leading foot. Do not twist your body.