PURPOSE

The purpose of this program is to provide employees with information on proper care of their back to help reduce the potential for back injuries in the workplace.

1. GENERAL
2. Employees should never attempt to lift materials or objects alone without assistance under any of the circumstances listed below:

* The weight of the material or object is too heavy for the single employee to lift with ease.
* The bulk of the material or object is expansive to the point that the employee cannot comfortably get both arms around the material.
* The material or object is unstable and will topple or fall once lifted.
* The material or object is slippery or hard to grasp.
* The material or object is too tall for the employee to see over.
* The material or object is so heavy that the employee will need to drop it as opposed to lowering it to the ground by using proper bending techniques.

1. Employees should regularly exercise, especially the back, stomach and leg muscles. Employees have an obligation to their own health and safety to maintain good physical conditioning when carrying, moving, pushing, lifting, or otherwise handling heavy materials.
2. Managers and Supervisor must periodically evaluate work areas as well as employees' work techniques to assess the potential for workplace hazards and prevention of injuries. New operations should be evaluated to engineer out hazards before work processes are implemented.
3. When lifting objects, never turn at the waist or shift your body to one side. Objects properly centered to body mass will subject the employee’s torso to less strain.
4. When carrying objects, never turn at the waist or hold objects extended away from the body. Turn the whole body as a unit, all movements should be coordinated.
5. Before manual lifting is performed, a hazard assessment must be completed. The assessment must consider:

* The size, bulk and overall weight of the object,
* Whether the weight of the material or object is too heavy for the single employee to lift with ease or is a two-man lift is required,
* If mechanical lifting equipment is required,
* Whether vision is obscured while carrying and if the walking surface and path where the object is to be carried.

1. Listed below are the basic rules established by the Company whenever an employee is involved in lifting objects or materials:

* Get a firm footing with your feet apart for a stable stance,
* Stand close to the load,
* Squat, don’t bend from the waist,
* Take a deep breath and tighten the stomach muscles to help support your back while under the stress of a load,
* Lift with your legs (they are a lot stronger then your back), bringing your back to the vertical (straight up) position,
* Hold the load close to your body,
* If you must turn, turn with your feet, not by twisting your back,
* Set the load down again, by squatting, not by bending your back, and
* Keep your fingers from pinch points

1. Manual lifting equipment such as dollies, hand trucks, lift-assist devices, jacks, carts, hoists must be provided for employees. Other engineering controls such as conveyors, lift tables, and work station design should be considered. Use of provided equipment by employees shall be enforced by Company Supervisors. Where use of lifting equipment is impractical or not possible, two man lifts must be used.
2. GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES
3. When walking, stand erect, and push off with the balls of the feet while landing heel to toe.
4. When sitting, keep feet flat on the floor, in a straight line from the knees. Sit forward slightly, so the lower or (lumbar region) of our back comes into contact with the back of the chair.
5. When sleeping, place a pillow under the bend of the knees so that they are slightly elevated. This places the spine in a more natural curve and may eliminate the backaches and discomfort some individual’s feel after waking.
6. When working, avoid attempting to catch objects or materials that fall or slip. This sudden motion on your part will subject the back to the responsibility of supporting weight it was not prepared to accept.
7. When working, take an opportunity throughout the workday to perform back assisting exercises from the standing position. Examples of some exercises employees may perform include:

* Standing with feet spread slightly apart, but in line with the shoulders. Place hands on both hips and turn to full radius from left to right.
* Standing with hands and arms extended horizontally to each side, and twisting at the hips right to left.
* Standing with hands and arms extended horizontally and simultaneously raising both arms over the head. Lean as far as you can without over-exerting, from side to side.
* Employees may place hand on hips, stand on the balls of the feet, then lift and lower himself/herself repetitively. This exercise will help strengthen the calf and leg muscles. Strong legs are also important to safe lifting.

1. BACK INJURY MANAGEMENT
2. Employees who experience back injuries usually do so due to improper lifting, carrying, pulling, pushing, lack of or improper training, the use of poor judgment, or a combination of these factors. Musculoskeletal injuries caused by improper lifting must be investigated and documented. Investigation findings must be incorporated into work procedures in order to prevent future injuries.
3. Following prescribed work practices and using good common sense will eliminate the need for a back management program. However, employees are prone to suffer back-related injuries from time to time, despite the company’s best efforts. With this in mind, the company considers the below procedure mandatory for the reporting of back related injuries:

* Stop work immediately. Even at the sign of the slightest twinge. You may prevent a back injury from occurring by recognizing the signs.
* Report to a supervisor or other management person.
* Provide the necessary information required to complete the Employer’s First Report of Injury.
* If necessary, request transportation to a medical facility for treatment.
* Provide a specimen for post-accident drug testing under the company’s written substance abuse program provision.
* Note: Injuries must be recorded and reported as required by 29 CFR 1904.

1. EMPLOYEE TRAINING
2. The company will annually schedule employees to complete specific training related to safe lifting practices and procedures.
3. Training will include at a minimum:

* General principles of ergonomics,
* Recognition of hazards and injuries,
* Manual lifting techniques & back injury prevention,
* Procedures for reporting hazardous conditions, and
* Methods and procedures for early reporting of injuries

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| **Reviewed and Approved** |
| Quality Manager or President |  |  |
|  | Date |