

# LOSS CONTROL

## Newsletter



### Safe Lifting with Mechanical Aids

Long term employee health requires putting the least amount of strain possible on the body and especially the back.

Lifting and handling heavy items creates strain risk and can cause back injuries, hernias and other strains. While a worker's physical condition and age play a large role in the types and severity of these injuries, the best way to eliminate injury risk is to eliminate the physical risks of manual lifting and handling. And the best way to accomplish this is to train employees on how to use mechanical handling aids.

While not every lift can be mechanized, every lift should be evaluated with the goal of reducing risk to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.



**When in doubt, stop. And think. And ask: Is it smarter and safer to use a mechanical aid for this load?**

#### ASSESSING MANUAL HANDLING RISKS

A simple way to assess manual handling activities is to look at four specific areas – Task, Individual, Load and Environment (easily remembered by the acronym TILE).

Key factors to consider in each *TILE* element are:

#### *THE TASK*

The first and most important step is to take a few seconds to think about the task. The few seconds you devote to this might be the difference between having a healthy employee and one who is injured for life.

- Does the activity involve twisting, stooping, bending or a seated position?
- How far is the move distance?
- Will there be pushing, pulling or precise positioning of the load?
- Might it result in sudden movement?
- Might it require rest or recovery periods?
- Does it require team handling?

#### *THE INDIVIDUAL*

- Does the individual require unusual strength or height for the activity?
- Is the individual pregnant, disabled or suffering from a health problem?
- Is special knowledge or training required?

#### *THE LOAD*

- Is the load heavy, unwieldy or difficult to grip?
- Is it sharp or hot or cold?
- Are the contents likely to move or shift during the move?

#### *THE ENVIRONMENT*

- Are there space constraints, uneven, slippery or unstable floors or variations in floor levels?
- Are conditions extremely hot, cold or humid?
- Is there poor lighting or poor ventilation?
- If outside, are there gusty winds?
- Will clothing or Personal Protective Equipment restrict movement?

#### QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter or for additional loss control information, please contact Mark Valentine at 816-698-4611 or [mark.valentine@aon.com](mailto:mark.valentine@aon.com).

## Safe Lifting with Mechanical Aids Cont.

### MECHANICAL HANDLING AIDS

Mechanical handling aids can reduce the risk of injury when used correctly. However, be aware that their use may introduce other risks that need to be evaluated. Types include: rolling platforms/trucks, hand trucks, shelf trucks, semi-live skids, forklifts, dollies, pallet jacks and ramps.

- Which aids are available?
- Do you know how to select the right equipment for the task?
- Are you trained to operate the equipment?
- Is the equipment inspected regularly and kept in good and safe operating condition? Doing so saves time and effort.
- Is the equipment maintained according to manufacturer standards?
- Using a visual inspection, is the equipment free of defects such as loose wheels or handles or damaged platforms?

The importance of safe lifting techniques cannot be overstated. How and when to use mechanical aids is equally as important. Proper training on when to use mechanical aids and enforcement of their use will result in fewer claims and lower claims costs, which contributes to greater worker productivity, improved employee morale, and ultimately the long term health and welfare of your employees.

### IF YOU MUST LIFT A LOAD BY YOURSELF..... WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

1. Know your limits. Test the load to ensure that you can handle it safely. If you cannot manage the load or you are not sure, ASK FOR ASSISTANCE.
2. Use your body weight to start the load moving if using a trolley or platform truck. Push rather than pull whenever possible. DO NOT JERK.
3. Use a wide stance and make sure you have a firm footing.
4. Tighten your stomach muscles.
5. DO NOT hold your breath – exhale at the moment of greatest exertion.
6. Make certain your balance is good and you have a good grip. Watch where you are going.
7. Keep the load close to your body to reduce strain and keep the heaviest side of the load next to your body to avoid uneven forces on the spine.
8. Keep your head level and trunk tall to maintain the spine's natural curvature.
9. Lift steadily with your legs – NOT YOUR BACK.
10. Keep your shoulders level and facing in the same direction as your hips.
11. Point your feet in the direction of the move – DO NOT TWIST. Take extra care with awkward loads.
12. Place the load down by using your leg muscles and maintaining the spine's natural curve as much as possible.

This newsletter is distributed by the Kansas Automobile Dealers Workers' Compensation Fund (KADWCF) to increase awareness and stress the importance of safe work practices.

Reporting a claim to Gallagher Bassett (GB)

**Fund Account Number: 004352**

Internet: [www.risxfacs.com](http://www.risxfacs.com)

Telephone: 1-800-779-6142

Fax: 1-800-748-6159

Email: [tnwclaims@tnwinc.com](mailto:tnwclaims@tnwinc.com)

Dedicated Adjuster:

Josie Landes – Senior Adjuster

Phone: 816-216-5516

[Josephine\\_Landes@gbtpa.com](mailto:Josephine_Landes@gbtpa.com)

*(Per above, please report claims to [tnwclaims@tnwinc.com](mailto:tnwclaims@tnwinc.com).)*

Claim related medical bills should be mailed to:

Gallagher Bassett Central Bill  
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Any other claim related information should be  
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Gallagher Bassett

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Kansas City, MO 64131

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You can also email the information directly to the adjuster. The preferred method to report claims is via the internet.

