Lifting safety toolbox talk: safe lifting and manual handling

29 CFR 1926.250, 1910.138, 1926.21, 1910.176, 1910.136, 1926.28

Date _____ Trainer _____ Location _____

Opening question

What is the heaviest or most awkward thing you will move today, and how are you going to move it?

Why it matters

We lift, carry, push and pull materials by hand all day. One bad lift can strain your back, and a dropped load can crush fingers or toes. Even light loads add up when you move them all shift with poor technique. Planning the move takes a moment and can save you a lot of pain.

Key points

1. **Size up the load and the path**
   Before you lift, check the weight, the shape and where you can get a good grip. Look for sharp edges, splinters and nails, and tip one corner to test the weight. Clear your path of debris and tripping hazards before you pick anything up. In construction, aisles and passageways must be kept clear for the safe movement of workers and material handling equipment.
   29 CFR 1926.250(a)(3)

2. **Get help from equipment or a partner**
   Use carts, dollies, hand trucks, pallet jacks or hoists whenever you can, and let the equipment take the weight. Run powered equipment such as a forklift only if you are trained and authorized. If a load is too heavy or awkward for one person, get a partner. For a team lift, pick one leader who calls the lift so everyone lifts and sets down together.

3. **Lift with your legs and keep it close**
   Stand close to the load with your feet about shoulder width apart. Bend at your hips and knees, keep your back straight and get a firm grip. Tighten your stomach muscles and lift smoothly with your legs, keeping the load close to your body. Do not jerk the load.

4. **Do not twist, and set it down with care**
   Turn by moving your feet, not by twisting your back. If the load blocks your view, get help or use equipment. Set the load down the way you picked it up, bending your knees and keeping your fingers clear. If you feel a pull or pain, stop and tell your supervisor.

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5 Protect your hands and feet

Wear gloves that fit and suit the load, and safety-toe boots where loads can drop or roll. In general industry, employers must select and require hand protection when hands are exposed to hazards such as severe cuts, abrasions or punctures (29 CFR 1910.138(a)), and must make sure protective footwear is used where falling or rolling objects can injure feet (29 CFR 1910.136(a)). In construction, the employer must require appropriate PPE wherever workers are exposed to hazardous conditions (29 CFR 1926.28(a)), and used lumber must have all nails withdrawn before stacking (29 CFR 1926.250(b)(8)(i)).

29 CFR 1910.138(a)

6 Stack materials so they stay put

Materials stored in tiers must be stacked and secured so they will not slide or collapse, in construction (29 CFR 1926.250(a)(1)) and in general industry (29 CFR 1910.176(b)). In construction, bagged materials must be stacked by stepping back the layers and cross-keying the bags at least every 10 bags high (29 CFR 1926.250(b)(4)), and lumber that will be handled manually must not be stacked more than 16 feet high (29 CFR 1926.250(b)(8)(iv)). Store heavy items at about waist height when you can, so the next person does not have to lift from the floor.

29 CFR 1926.250(a)(1)

Scenario

Picture this: a pallet of bagged mortar arrives late in the day. To save time, a worker grabs two bags at once, bends at the waist and twists to toss them onto a pile by the mixer. The pile is getting tall and starting to lean, and a hand truck sits unused by the gate. What could go wrong here, and how should the crew move and stack the rest?

Crew discussion

1. Which loads on this job are too heavy or awkward for one person?
2. Where are the carts, dollies and hoists, and what keeps us from using them?
3. How will we call a team lift so everyone lifts and sets down together?
4. Which stacks or storage areas here need fixing before someone pulls from them?

Bottom line **Plan every lift, let equipment or a partner take heavy loads, and keep the load close without twisting.**

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Sign-in sheet / Hoja de asistencia

Topic / Tema: Safe lifting and manual handling / Levantamiento seguro y manejo manual de cargas

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Trainer / Instructor: _____ Location / Lugar: _____ Company / Empresa: _____

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