

## 1.1 PURPOSE

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this policy is to emphasize proper lifting techniques, augmented with appropriate mechanical aids, to prevent back injuries. This includes training for employee lifting techniques, discussion of work-related risk factors for back injury, and knowledge of techniques to identify jobs with risk factors.

## 1.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.2.1 It is the responsibility of each TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION employee to immediately report any unsafe act or condition to a supervisor and for the supervisor to share those reports with the safety director.

### 1.2.2 Supervisor

- 1.2.2.1 Ensure implementation of company safety plan on back protection.

- 1.2.2.2 Ensure that adequate funds are available and budgeted for the purchase of equipment and supplies to aid in minimizing lifting related back injuries.

- 1.2.2.3 Identify the employees affected by this safety policy.

- 1.2.2.4 Ensure that the equipment necessary to move loads consistent with the employee capabilities and job requirement is provided and will ensure that the required training is obtained for the affected employees.

- 1.2.2.5 Ensure that no employee is required to lift beyond his or her capabilities. Upon request, employees are to receive assistance in lifting. Compliance is ensured through the manager's auditing process.

### 1.2.3 Employee

- 1.2.3.1 Report any unsafe act associated with this policy as well as any injuries to their supervisors and/or safety director.

- 1.2.3.2 Practice safe lifting techniques.

- 1.2.3.3 Immediately report any unsafe act or condition to a supervisor; the supervisor will share those reports with the safety director.

## 1.3 RISK FACTORS

- 1.3.1 Work-related risk factors have been identified from various studies and include:

- 1.3.1.1 Handling heavy loads

- 1.3.1.2 Heavy lifting and heavy work

- 1.3.1.3 Repetitive and frequent lifting
  - 1.3.1.4 Lifting loads near one's strength capacity
  - 1.3.1.5 Occasional, very stressful load handling
  - 1.3.1.6 Sudden, unforeseen events (accidents)
  - 1.3.1.7 Extreme postures of the back (twisting, bending, stretching, and reaching)
  - 1.3.1.8 Prolonged standing or sitting
  - 1.3.1.9 Other suspected risk factors, including whole body vibration, pushing, pulling, carrying, twisting, and bending
  - 1.3.1.10 The employee's physical condition
- 1.3.2 Additional personal factors that make some individuals more susceptible to back injury are not included in the above list. Those jobs and tasks that have several or many of the above risk factors should receive a higher priority in assessing back injury risk.

## 1.4 IDENTIFYING JOBS WITH RISK FACTORS

- 1.4.1 TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION will identify those jobs that involve many of the risk factors and specific lifting tasks for further analysis. Before manual lifting is performed, a hazard assessment will be completed. The assessment must consider size, bulk, and weight of the object if mechanical lifting equipment is required, if multiple workers are required, and if vision is obscured while carrying objects or the walking surface and path are obscured where the object is to be carried.
- 1.4.2 Once specific lifting tasks are identified and assessed, examine any options that can eliminate or minimize back injuries related to lifting activities. Assess tasks for the following options:
- 1.4.2.1 Eliminate the lifting task
  - 1.4.2.2 Substitute the task with another, where task elimination is not possible
  - 1.4.2.3 Minimize and control the stress level imposed on the back when lifting, if the two previous approaches do not work
  - 1.4.2.4 Consider the use of trained and experienced personnel (such as the facilities department or a 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor) for the relocation of offices and moving heavy, bulky equipment and furniture.
- 1.4.3 Supervision must periodically evaluate work areas and employees' work techniques to assess the potential for and prevention of injuries. New operations should be evaluated to engineer out hazards before work processes are implemented.

- 1.4.4 Management of the company will evaluate work conditions, technologies, and procedures to assess the risk to workers of sustaining manual lifting injuries and incorporate correct measures in the design phase of the work.
- 1.4.5 TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION will perform incident investigations and root causes analyses when company workers sustain injuries related to manual lifting. The findings of the investigation and corrective actions will be incorporated into safe work processes to prevent future injuries.

## 1.5 PREVENTING BACK INJURIES

- 1.5.1 The most effective way to prevent back injury is to redesign the work environment and work tasks to reduce lifting hazards.
- 1.5.2 Use of lifting mechanisms will be enforced by supervisors. Musculoskeletal injuries caused by improper lifting will be investigated and documented. Investigation findings into work procedures will be implemented to prevent future injuries.
- 1.5.3 Before lifting or carrying a heavy object, assess the situation.
- 1.5.4 Before lifting, size up the load. Test the weight by lifting a corner of the object. If it is too heavy or if the object is an odd shape, stop.
- 1.5.5 If there is any doubt, ask for help. Multiple employees involved in a lift should communicate methods to ensure that one employee is not injured by the actions (or inactions) of another employee involved in the lift.
- 1.5.6 Manual lifting equipment such as dollies, hand trucks, carts, and hoists are provided. Where a mechanical lifting device is not practical or possible, two man lifts must be performed. Other engineering controls such as conveyors, lift tables, and work station design should be considered. When new operations are planned, proper engineering controls such as lift assists, mechanical lifting devices, and other suitable engineering controls will be evaluated to engineer out the hazards caused by manual lifting.
- 1.5.7 Consider using gloves that will improve your grip and protect your hands.
- 1.5.8 Never lift anything unless you are sure that you can do it safely using proper lifting techniques.
- 1.5.9 Avoid overloading.
- 1.5.10 Stretch out or warm up your back to increase circulation.
- 1.5.11 When lifting, always keep your back straight or slightly arched. Let your legs do the lifting. Follow these procedures for proper lifting:
  - 1.5.11.1 Start by placing your feet close to the load. Get a firm footing.
  - 1.5.11.2 Center your body over your feet.
  - 1.5.11.3 Tighten your stomach muscles.

- 1.5.11.4 Squat and bend at the knees and keep back straight or slightly arched.
  - 1.5.11.5 Grasp the load securely with your hands, and pull the load close to you. The farther the load is from your body, the heavier it is.
  - 1.5.11.6 Smoothly lift straight up. Never twist your body while lifting and keep your head up.
  - 1.5.11.7 Look straight ahead, not down while lifting.
  - 1.5.11.8 Always lift with your legs. Your leg muscles are powerful; the muscle bundles in the legs are each 8 to 10 inches or more in diameter, compared with the very thin  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch layer of muscles along the back.
- 1.5.12 When carrying the load:
- 1.5.12.1 Keep your back straight or slightly arched.
  - 1.5.12.2 Walk slowly and surely.
  - 1.5.12.3 Shift your feet to change directions. Never twist your back. Twisting actions put a grinding, compressive weight on the cartilage in the spine. Repeated frequently enough, the action can cause cartilage failure.
  - 1.5.12.4 Avoid leaning forward or backwards.
  - 1.5.12.5 Avoid lifting over your head.
  - 1.5.12.6 If you become tired, set the load down and rest for a few moments.
- 1.5.13 Setting down the load is the reverse of lifting the load and should be performed as follows:
- 1.5.13.1 Position yourself where you want the load.
  - 1.5.13.2 Squat down; let your legs do the work.
  - 1.5.13.3 Remember not to twist your body while setting down a load, and keep your head up.
  - 1.5.13.4 Once the load is where you want it, release your grip. Never release your grip until the load is secure.
- 1.5.14 When using a hand truck or push cart, remember:
- 1.5.14.1 It is easier and safer to push than to pull.
  - 1.5.14.2 Stay close to the load, try not to lean over, keep your back straight or slightly arched.
  - 1.5.14.3 Use both hands to control the hand truck or cart.
  - 1.5.14.4 Use tie-downs, if necessary, to secure the load.
  - 1.5.14.5 Avoid stairs and inclines. Use the freight elevator, if available.

- 1.5.15 Always use a forklift if an object is too heavy to lift or carry with a hand truck. Never attempt to operate a forklift or other equipment unless you have been trained and authorized by TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION to do so.

## 1.6 ERGONOMICS

1.6.1 Ergonomics is the interaction between employees and the objects in their work environment.

1.6.2 Evaluate jobs that require frequent lifting, twisting, bent postures, or pushing or pulling.

1.6.3 Redesign workstations and tasks so that:

1.6.3.1 The load is close to the body.

1.6.3.2 The load is between shoulder and knuckle height.

1.6.3.3 Twisting lifts are eliminated.

1.6.3.4 Gravity moves the load when possible.

1.6.3.5 Slides, hoists, hydraulic lifts, and hand trucks are used to move heavy loads.

1.6.3.6 Weight is reduced to the lowest level.

1.6.3.7 There is sufficient workspace for proper lifting techniques.

1.6.3.8 Seated workers have adjustable swivel chairs with back support.

1.6.3.9 Bending at the waist or back is minimal.

1.6.4 An effective medical management program for back injuries is an essential part of an ergonomic plan. Medical management will allow for early detection of injuries so that they can be treated before they become more serious. It will also prevent future problems from developing. The medical management program should address the following:

1.6.4.1 Injury and illness recordkeeping

1.6.4.2 Early recognition and reporting

1.6.4.3 Systematic evaluation and referral

1.6.4.4 Conservative treatment

1.6.4.5 Conservative return to work

1.6.4.6 Systematic monitoring

1.6.4.7 Training in which employees are instructed how and when to report injuries

## 1.7 MEDICAL MANAGEMENT

1.7.1 TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION encourages all employees to immediately report any symptoms of discomfort that may be associated with their job duties. In most cases, employees are to report

to their immediate supervisor. Those supervisors are responsible to recommend alternative work or medical evaluation for injured or ill employees.

- 1.7.2 The safety director will record and file written reports from the first observation of injury through all subsequent follow up activities. They are also responsible to forward information about the worker injury or illness to HR.
- 1.7.3 Every work procedure that causes a worker injury or illness will be investigated and reported. This documentation provides vital information for the identification of job-related risk factors so that the problems can be corrected before other injuries occur.
- 1.7.4 After an injured employee has been treated by the health care provider, TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION will monitor the recovery process and their return to work.
- 1.7.5 The safety director has a list of light and restricted duty jobs that have low musculoskeletal risks. This list is a valuable resource for assigning duties to recovering employees until they can resume their normal job functions.
- 1.7.6 After verification of an employee's job-related injury or illness, the safety director will review this plan and re-evaluate the worksite to determine if additional practices, procedures, or redesign of the station could be implemented to prevent similar injuries.

## 1.8 TRAINING

- 1.8.1 TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION's management will receive copies of this written program. TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION will train each employee who works a job with exposure to specific risk factors and each employee in a job where a work-related musculoskeletal disorder has been recorded.
- 1.8.2 These are the ergonomic elements taught to all employees:
  - 1.8.2.1 How to recognize workplace risk factors associated with work-related musculoskeletal disorders and the ways to reduce exposure to those risk factors.
  - 1.8.2.2 Signs and symptoms of work-related musculoskeletal disorders, the importance of early reporting, and medical management procedures.
  - 1.8.2.3 Reporting procedures and the person to whom the employee is to report workplace risk factors and work-related musculoskeletal disorders.
  - 1.8.2.4 TERRY R PITT CONSTRUCTION addresses and controls workplace risk factors by training workers on their role in the process and how to participate in the process.
  - 1.8.2.5 Opportunity to practice and demonstrate proper use of implemented control measures and safe work methods that apply to the job.
- 1.8.3 Each employee involved in job analysis will be trained in job analysis methods, especially as they relate to identifying workplace risk factors and evaluation and implementation of control measures.