

Toolbox

TALKS

Materials Handling/Lifting Safety

Improper materials handling/lifting at commercial job sites has traditionally been a large source of construction injuries.

Materials-handling best practices:

- Always lift with your legs and not your back (show example).
- Use materials-handling aids such as pallet jacks, dollies, carts and hand trucks whenever possible versus manually lifting and carrying heavy materials.
- If materials-handling aids are not available and the load is heavy and/or bulky, use two people, at a minimum, to lift and carry materials.
- If using a forklift to lift and move materials at a job site, make sure backup signals and other safety devices on the forklift are operational; drive slowly and beep around corners and in areas where others are working. Be extra careful when lifting a load to make sure no one is under the load. Use the daily forklift inspection checklist prior to using the forklift for the first time each day. Only authorized persons are allowed to use forklifts on job sites. Follow job site protocols at all times.
- If forklift is used in high-traffic areas or on the street, use a spotter at all times.
- Look at the carry path ahead of time to ensure there are no obstructions on the floor or other issues which could cause you to fall while carrying materials.
- Make sure lighting and other conditions are acceptable prior to carrying and lifting materials – if not, speak to your foreperson prior to starting a lift-and-carry operation.
- Wear gloves when lifting objects which could have sharp edges, splinters, etc.
- Do not rush while lifting and carrying materials.
- Concentrate on the job at hand as distractions could cause you or others to get injured.
- Wear safety vests and other required personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times you are highly visible to other employees and other trades working at the job site.
- If there are any concerns or issues regarding handling materials and/or lifting, always ask your foreperson and/or any designated site-safety person prior to attempting the operation.

Date of Safety Talk _____

Company _____

Talk given by _____

Signature _____

Attending Employees:

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_____	_____
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Notes:

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