



C3 Safety Training: 12 Month Module

Module 11: November – Material Handling

Company Name: _____ Date: _____

C3 Project Name: _____

From time to time everyone on a construction job has injured a hand, fingers, toes or back while handling materials. Proper material handling is critical to the successful working on any job. Material handling is also potentially dangerous to those moving the material from the delivery area to its storage place and from the storage area to the work area.

In our construction work, manual handling of tools and materials are critical to getting the job done. This could be tools, lumber, steel, stone, bagged material and all the other items that have to be moved on any construction job. We are exposed more times, in more ways, to more different sizes, shapes and weights than men in most other occupations.

Production is important, but the focus must be on Safe Production. Keep that in the back of your mind. Don't take risky chances and stay out of harm's way. Nobody goes to work thinking "I'm going to get hurt or killed on the job today." But every day individual construction workers can suffer sometimes disabling or fatal injuries on the jobsite.

Let's review some proper manual material handling methods to help to reduce these injuries and deaths:

- Don't try to carry too bulky or too heavy of a load. Get help. Always be sure you can see where you're going.
- Make sure you have a firm grip on material before lifting it.
- Before you set material down, be sure that your fingers and toes are in the clear.
- Watch out for sharp rough edges. When handling sharp edges, protect your hands with gloves.
- Use proper lifting techniques to reduce risk of back injuries.
- Lift gradually — do not jerk.
- Avoid twisting when carrying a heavy load — if you have to turn, do so by shifting your feet.
- When carrying loads, keep them as close to your body as possible.
- When carrying long pieces, look out for other workers. As a general rule, the leading end of long pieces should be high and the trailing end should be low.
- When carrying boxes and/or material make sure you can see in the direction of your travel.
- Maintain good housekeeping of aisles, passageways and work areas at ALL times.
- Do not store non-compatible material together. For example, gas containers and bulk lumber do not mix.
- Do not store material near openings in floors, landings or the exterior of building under construction
- Know the intended loads and the floors maximum capacity rating.



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- If a load shifts, never try to stop the falling load. Get clear of the load to avoid injury.
- When staging material, never stack materials too high. As a general rule, heavier material always on bottom and lighter material on top.
- If you slip or trip while carrying material, let the material drop.

In this short discussion, we can't go into all the lifting and carrying situations that we may come up against. Just remember, there's a right way and a wrong way to do any manual handling job. Figure out the right way, then proceed with your task.

Remember: There is a place for everything and everything needs to be in its place. The proper storage of work materials will make your job easier. Proper lifting and handling, with help if needed, will keep you from being injured on the job.

What are you doing to make sure it doesn't happen on your shift?