WEEKLY SAFETY MEETING
All Euramax Subsidiaries

BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING

Safety Meeting Contents

- Meeting Notice
- Leaders Guide
- Employee Handout
- Employee Quiz
- Meeting Sign-In Sheet
- Employee Puzzle

PRIOR TO THE WEEKLY MEETING:

- Post the meeting notice by the timeclock
- Read through the Leaders Guide and Employee Handout to familiarize yourself with the topic for the week
- Make copies of the employee handout (one for each employee)
- Make copies of the employee quiz (one for each employee)
- Make copies of the weekly puzzle (one for each employee)

AT THE SAFETY MEETING:

- Pass around the meeting sign-in sheet – ensure all employees present at the meeting print and sign their names
- Pass out the employee hand-out
- Pass out the employee quiz
- Pass out the weekly puzzle
- Keep the meeting simple
- Encourage discussion and questions
WEEKLY SAFETY MEETING NOTICE

THIS WEEK, OUR SAFETY MEETING WILL COVER BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING

TIME: ___________________________________________________________

DATE: __________________________________________________________

PLACE: _________________________________________________________
BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING

Leaders Guide

EURAMAX PROCEDURE REFERENCE:
H-1.0 Lifting Procedure

MEETING OBJECTIVE:
Improper lifting and carrying are responsible for countless accidents and injuries on the job every year. The most common type of injury involves the back. Millions of people suffer from chronic back pain because they failed to lift and carry loads correctly. The purpose of this meeting is to teach your employees the proper lifting and carrying techniques to help avoid injury.

MEETING PREPARATION:
Read the Euramax procedure, understand the contents, and ensure compliance.

Familiarize yourself with safe lifting and carrying techniques. You will be demonstrating these techniques during the meeting.

Find an empty box to use for demonstration purposes.

Determine what types of mechanical aids your facility uses to assist with lifting and carrying (for example, handtrucks, hooks and handles). Be prepared to discuss the proper use of these items.

Review the employee handout to see if there are any other materials you wish to bring to the meeting.

Use a flip chart during the discussion to write key points and employee responses. This technique visually reinforces your instruction.

MATERIALS CHECKLIST:
- Empty box (for demonstration)
- Flip chart and marking pens

MEETING
INTRODUCTION
Watch me lift this box. (Bend over to pick up empty box. Lift incorrectly – don’t bend your knees.) That’s how you do it right? (Wait for response.) Did any of you see anything wrong with the way I just lifted this box? (Wait for response.) The truth is, that’s not how you should lift a box. You’re supposed to bend your knees and take other precautions to ensure that you
don’t hurt your back. But I’m sure many of you lift this way – if not all the time, once in a while.

Some people lift improperly and pay for it the rest of their lives. Others practice poor lifting and carrying habits every day but don’t realize they’re injuring their backs. They lift incorrectly for months and feel no pain. Then one day their backs can stand no more stress and they become a statistic – one of the millions of people who suffer from back problems in this country. Today we’re going to learn how to avoid becoming one of these statistics. We’re going to learn how to avoid back injury by learning how to lift and carry correctly.

Back injuries are the most common disabling work injury, according to the National Safety Council. In human terms, back injuries result in untold pain and misery that can last for days, months, or even years. Furthermore, once people injure their back, they are five times more likely to injure it again. The most common on-the-job back injuries are related to improper lifting and carrying. And improper lifting and carrying can cause many other types of injuries as well, such as injuries to hands and feet.

**DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**Question:** What types of injuries could you suffer as a result of improper lifting and carrying?

**Answer:**
- Hernias and back injuries are the most common. Others include…
  - Injuries to the hands and fingers, such as cuts, splinters, and pinched fingers.
  - Injuries to the feet and legs – if you lose your balance or drop a heavy object
  - Injuries to the eyes, head, trunk – when opening a wire-bound box or bale, handling cable or metal strapping, etc.

**Question:** How can you avoid these injuries?

**Answer:** Eliminate the need to lift loads manually by using mechanical lifting devices whenever possible.

Practice safe lifting and carrying procedures.
BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING

Leaders Guide

**Question:** What are some common unsafe lifting and carrying practices?

**Answer:** Improper lifting

- Carrying too heavy a load
- Twisting the body instead of moving the feet
- Incorrect gripping
- Carrying loads far from your body
- Failing to observe proper foot or hand clearance
- Not wearing gloves when required

**Explain** that there are three phases to correct lifting/carrying – the pre-lift phase, the lifting/carrying phase, and the setting-down phase. (Use your empty box to demonstrate each of the following steps.

**Pre-lift phase – preparing to lift:**

- Size up the load. Look for slivers, jagged edges, burrs, rough or slippery surfaces, and protruding nails. Decide what protective clothing you need to wear (safety shoes, leather gloves, etc.)

- Test the load. Get help if you can’t comfortably lift the load alone. Other options: Divide a large load into smaller, more manageable loads, or get a handtruck or other mechanical aid.

- Make sure there’s a clear path in which to carry the load. Look for any slipping or tripping hazards before you move.

**Lifting/carrying phase – correct posture for safe lifting and carrying:**

- Stand close to the load, feet apart, with a firm footing.

- Squat down, bending at the hips and knees – not at the waist.
BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING

Leaders Guide

- While gripping the load, arch your lower back inward by pulling your shoulders back and sticking your chest out.

- Lift with the legs, sparing the back muscles.

- Once the load is lifted, keep it close to your body to minimize back strain. Stand upright when carrying the load.

- Pivot your feet to guide your body around. Never twist!

Setting-down phase – the best way to put down the load:

- Put the load down the same way you picked it up – by bending at the hips and knees and keeping the lower back arched inward.

Practice these steps with your group using the empty box. If the group is small enough, give everybody a turn.

Discuss proper lifting and carrying techniques for objects and loads commonly handled at your facility, other than boxes and cartons (which you’ve already demonstrated).

Discuss the proper use of mechanical aids for lifting and carrying that are available at your facility. For example…

Hooks and handles
Crowbars
Rollers and cradles
Jacks
Pulleys
Handtrucks, dollies, wheelbarrows

SUMMARY:
Today, you’ve learned correct lifting and carrying techniques for the objects and loads you handle on the job. I’m sure most of you practice these techniques regularly. For those of you who tend to get careless from time to time and take shortcuts, I suggest you reconsider. The cost of an injury could be a lot more than you bargained for. These procedures are designed to protect you and keep your back in good condition.
BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING

Leaders Guide

EMPLOYEE HANDOUT:

A. Employee Handout
B. Back Safety / Proper Lifting Quiz
C. Back Safety / Proper Lifting Puzzle

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. True
2. True
3. False. Lifting is a common cause of back injuries and should be avoided
4. False. It’s best to plan and clear the route, test the load, and do a few warm-up bends and stretches before lifting
5. True
6. False. Move your feet to change directions; twisting is a major cause of back injuries
7. False. Grip a load firmly with both entire hands
8. True
9. False
10. False. Stop, rest, don’t move, and get medical attention if you develop back pain. It may be more serious than it seems.

PUZZLE ANSWERS:

Across
2. Sudden
3. Twist
4. Legs
5. Exercise
7. Help
8. Shoulder
9. Firm

Down
1. Close
2. Stretching
6. Stomach
Back injuries can be extremely painful and long-lasting. They can keep you in bed for extended periods of time and they may occasionally even require surgery. For some people, back pain doesn’t really ever go away.

Back strains and injuries can happen anywhere, but a great many of them happen at work. OSHA has reported that “Back strains due to overexertion represent one of the largest segments of employee injuries in the American workplace. Only the common cold accounts for more lost days of work.”

The National Safety Council has stated that overexertion is the cause of about 31 percent of all disabling work injuries. Injuries to the back occur more frequently than do injuries to any other part of the body, so it’s very important to understand just why types of acts are likely to strain our backs, and how to perform tasks in ways that reduce the risk.

Improper lifting is probably the greatest single cause of back pain and injury, so it’s worth taking the time to learn how to do it correctly. We’ll also look at how we can sit, stand, sleep, and perform a variety of tasks in ways that won’t harm the back. You can injure your back with one wrong move. The kind of thing that can happen by shoveling snow— or by a buildup of stress on weak muscles. Other kinds of back injuries include:

- Muscle spasms, which are usually caused by tension or stress
- Strain and sprains, the result of too much exertion of weak muscles, or incorrect lifting
- Slipped disc, which are tears or other damage to the disc between the vertebrae, causing the vertebrae to rub together and irritate or damage the spinal nerves.
- Hernias, which are ruptures in the abdominal wall caused by strains from lifting.

There are various tasks and movements, especially lifting, that can lead to back injuries if they’re not done properly. The biggest hazard to your back is YOU. Among the things that make back injuries much more likely are:

- Poor physical condition
- Poor posture
- Extra weight
- Stress
- Overdoing

**Identifying Hazards to Your Back**

The way you live and treat your body has a lot to do with your back health. Even if your back is in good shape, there are a number of tasks and actions that can create trouble if you don’t do them properly, in a way that minimizes strain on your back. Among the hazards to the back that may be encountered on the job are:

- Heavy lifting
- Twisting and lifting at the same time
- Lifting objects that have odd shapes
- Reaching and lifting objects
- Bending and overexerting
- Lifting items whose weights vary
- Sitting or standing too long in one position

**Steps for Proper Lifting**

**Plan ahead before lifting** Knowing what you’re doing and where you’re going will prevent you from making awkward movements while holding something heavy. Clear a path, and if lifting something with another person, make sure both of you agree to the plan.

**Lift close to your body** You will be a stronger, and more stable lifter if the object is held close to your body rather than at the end of your reach. Make sure you have a firm hold on the object you are lifting, and keep it balanced close to your body.

**Keep your feet shoulder-width apart** A solid base of support is important while lifting. Holding your feet too close together will be unstable, too far apart will hinder movement. Keep the feet about shoulder-width apart and take short steps.

**Bend your knees and keep your back straight** Practice the lifting motion before you lift the object, and think about your motion before you lift. Focus on keeping your spine straight, and raise and lower to the ground by bending your knees.

**Tighten your stomach muscles** Tightening your abdominal muscles will hold your back in a good lifting position and will help prevent excessive force on the spine.

**Lift with your legs** Your legs are many times stronger than your back muscles—let this strength work in your favor. Again, lower to the ground by bending your knees, not your back. Keep your eyes focused upwards to help keep your back straight.

**Get help if you’re straining** If an object is too heavy, or awkward in shape, make sure you have someone around who can help you lift.
BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING
Employee Quiz

Answer the following questions to see what you know about Back Safety / Proper Lifting.

1. OSHA say back strain is second to the common cold for causing lost days of work.
   True or False

2. Poor physical condition, poor posture, stress and overdoing all contribute to back injuries.
   True or False

3. The more lifting you do, the more you strengthen your back.
   True or False

4. When you have to lift, don’t plan: just go ahead and do it.
   True or False

5. Lifting safely means letting your legs, not your back, do the work.
   True or False

6. To change direction while carrying a load, you should twist your body, not move your feet.
   True or False

7. You should grip a load with just your fingers, not your hands.
   True or False

8. Two person lifts work best with people of the same height, one of whom signals where and when to move.
   True or False

9. It’s best for your back if you sit straight, with your back against a chair back, and change positions every so often.
   True or False

10. Back pain will usually go away if you ignore it.
    True or False
WEEKLY SAFETY MEETING
All Euramax Subsidiaries

BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING
Meeting Sign In Sheet

LOCATION ____________________

MEETING DATE ______________ MEETING CONDUCTED BY ________________________________

CONTENTS OF MEETING
(Attach Handouts, etc.)

ATTENDEES:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (Print)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Name (Print)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WEEKLY SAFETY MEETING
All Euramax Subsidiaries

BACK SAFETY / PROPER LIFTING
Employee Puzzle

ACROSS
2. Avoid ______ movements when carrying or lifting
3. When lifting or carrying, you should never ______ at the waist
4. Use your ______ when lifting, not your back
5. Frequent ______ can help your back stay healthy
7. Get ______ when lifting or carrying heavy or bulky objects
8. Reaching above your ______ should be avoided
9. A ______ mattress can help keep your body in a neutral position when sleeping

DOWN
1. Objects should be carried ______ to your body
2. ______ before lifting can help prevent back injuries
6. Strengthening your ______ muscles can help prevent back injuries