

## **Injury Prevention**

**Injury prevention begins with awareness.** Most injuries occur in a moment of haste or inattention. **Think before you act!** Ask yourself, is this the **safest** way to do the job? Injuries are costly to you and the company. Beyond the obvious pain, injuries cost you income and reduced quality of life. They cost the company money and quality of service. When you are not able to perform the duties of your job, we all lose.

### **Back Injuries**

Most back injuries occur when lifting. You must use proper lifting techniques to protect your back.

- **Stretch prior to lifting** to loosen muscles
- **Size up the load.** Test the load to see if you can lift it safely. Get a solid grip and maintain your balance.
- **Get close to the load** before lifting and keep the weight close to your body.
- **Make sure your footing is secure.**
- **Lift with your legs.** Bend your knees and keep your back straight. Lift smoothly and slowly.
- **Never twist while lifting!** Move your feet so that they point in the direction of the lift as you turn.
- **Watch for obstacles.** Make sure you have a clear path.
- **Drop the load the same way you picked it up.** Knees bent, back straight.
- **ASK FOR HELP!** Never attempt to move extremely heavy or awkward objects alone.

### **Hand Injuries**

25% of all of the bones in your body are in your hands. And we all use our hands to make a living. Yet, we seem to damage our hands a lot. The top five injuries to our hands are:

- Cuts and punctures (including splinters)
- Burns (nonchemical)
- Scrapes or abrasions
- Burns (chemical)
- Cold injuries (freezing)

Protect your hands at all times.

- **Wear gloves** to protect from burns, cuts, splinters, scrapes or abrasions.
- **Beware of pinch points** when operating equipment such as forklifts or liftgates, including trailer and tractor doors.
- **Avoid touching lines or equipment** that may be hot.
- **Never work on moving equipment.** Shut it down!
- If you do injure your hands, **get first aid treatment** immediately to avoid infections.

### **Leg Injuries (including the joints or bones in knees, ankles and feet)**

Leg muscles are strong, but like back injuries, leg injuries may be caused by improper lifting. In addition, leg injuries may be the result of slips, trips and falls. To protect your legs, you must:

- **Lift properly.** Have your feet firmly on the ground and in the proper position.
- **Watch your step!** Look for obstacles or hazards, debris on the ground (such as nails, rocks, potholes, broken pallets or carton straps).
- **Never jump from vehicles or docks!** Slips, hard or off balance landings result in twisted or sprained knees or ankles, broken bones or torn ligaments.

**Take care of yourself.**

**You have a responsibility to yourself and to those you work with to work safely.**