



Proper Handling Of Material

Improper handling of materials is one of the leading causes of nonfatal injuries in the service industry. In fact, one study concludes that 80% of workplace injuries were related in some way to improper material handling. The following guidelines will assist you in handling materials properly.

1. Before moving any material, check your surroundings and make sure there is nothing which may cause you to trip, slip, or fall while moving material.
2. Scrap and waste should be removed. Do not throw the scrap and waste from an elevated position. Place them in a cart, bucket, bin or use a chute that goes to the dumpster so you can avoid any hazards to yourself or others.
3. Secure any equipment which may shift or roll before moving it.
4. When a load of material is too heavy to handle, get some help. Call a co-worker; use a cart, dolly, or hand truck; or call for a forklift or crane.
5. If materials must be moved by hand, always use proper lifting techniques. Keep the object being lifted as close to your body as possible. Squat down with your back straight, butt down, head up, lift with your legs and avoid twisting your back while lifting.
6. Be aware of sharp edges on material. Protect your hands by wearing leather gloves.
7. Wear steel-toed boots or shoes if heavy material could roll or be dropped onto your feet.
8. When using a crane or fork lift, you must stay alert and stand clear so that you and others are not under the load or boom and are clear of any pinch points.
9. If you are moving any equipment overhead, you must rope off a lift area and wear a hard hat.
10. The crane operator is responsible for making sure the load is not too heavy. You are in charge of rigging and preparing the load for lift. Make sure the proper slings and carriers are used to secure the load.
11. When loading or unloading a truck, keep in mind that the load may shift slightly. When removing straps to unload materials or equipment, be sure you are in a safe position away from pinch points in case the load shift when straps or chains are removed.