

MCLB ALBANY SAFETYGRAM

Material Handling and Storage Safety

Why is safe material handling required?

In large warehouses, material movement in bulk is quite common. Warehouse employees move these materials using forklifts, conveyors, pallet jacks and more. There will be situations where individual workers carry heavy weights, and they might get injured in this process. The injuries are typically Musculo-skeletal which can take a long time to heal and at times the recovery becomes an expensive process for the employer. Damage to equipment and company assets can also be a byproduct of these incidents. To help mitigate and prevent this situation from happening the workers should be trained in safe material handling techniques to avoid injuries and material damage.

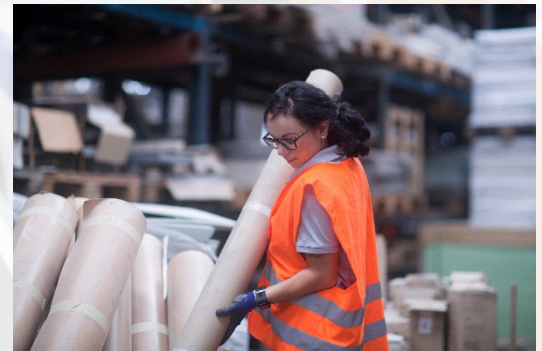
Here's some statistics that depict how improper material handling has affected people in bulk.

- About three of every four Americans whose job includes material handling suffer pain due to back injury at some time. More than 111,000 such injuries requiring days away from work were recorded in 2017, according to the Injury Facts, an online database created by the National Safety Council.
- About a fourth of American workers suffer from back pain, which tops the list of all reported work-related disorders.

What are some of the best practices for safe material handling?

Safe material handling practices are essential in any workplace to prevent injuries and ensure efficient operations. From assessing load weights to proper lifting techniques and equipment maintenance, adhering to best practices can mitigate risks and promote a secure working environment.

1. Employees should be able to assess how heavy the load is. If it is beyond individual capacity, additional help/equipment should be deployed. This helps in proper resource allocation for tasks.
2. Whenever materials are transported using forklifts or similar equipment arrangements, employees should ensure that it has a broad base so that the material container does not topple over.
3. Whenever employees need to pick up materials from racks, ensure that the ladders/lifts have a firm grip and broad base.
4. When lifting heavy objects from the ground, the employees should bend their knees and then lift the weight. The spine should be erect. The arms should always be close to the body and the object being lifted should be closer to the center of gravity. If this is not followed, the staff can run into risks of back injuries.
5. Storage racks storing heavy materials should be periodically monitored for wear and tear.
6. Moving equipment should always be fitted with sensors to avoid collisions on the shop floor. Materials should be secured correctly using belts/harnessing devices.



For further information visit OSHA Standard [1910.176 - Handling materials - general.](https://www.osha-slc.gov/standards/1910.176-handling-materials-general) | [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(osha.gov\)](https://www.osha-slc.gov/occupational-safety-and-health-administration)



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Prepared by: Jon A. Peacock

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