Do you practice proper lifting techniques?

There are nearly half a million disabling injuries on the job every year and a large percentage of them are back injuries. Improper lifting technique is the cause of many of these injuries. This is demonstrated by the fact that 23% of all workplace injuries occur while lifting or moving heavy materials. Injuries of this nature are painful and sometimes career-ending. However, these incidents can be avoided by practicing proper lifting procedures.

Factors involved in accurately assessing a lift:

The ability to lift an object will depend on the health, physical capability, and overall fitness of the individual performing the lift. Other factors to consider are:

Load placement:

- If you are moving the load manually, place the load directly in front of you, with both your feet and the load facing forward, in order to not twist your back.
- Don’t bend at your waist or lift with your back; bend at your knees and use your legs to perform the lift.

Weight lifted:

- The amount of weight to be lifted is a critical factor. The heavier the weight, the greater the potential for injury. Decrease the weight or reduce the number of lifts per day to decrease the potential of sustaining a back injury.
Factors involved in accurately assessing a lift (continued):

Proper grip:
- Hold loads as close to the body as possible.
  - The farther the load from the body, the greater the stress on the back.
  - Holding the load closely increases the safety of the lift by allowing your body to push an object as opposed to pulling it.
- Carry the load at waist level to create balance and reduce stress.

What should be done if the load looks too heavy or unsafe to be moved by only one person?
Find a way to move the load that will not put you at risk of a back injury. Mechanical methods, such as push carts or forklifts, are means of moving heavy loads without jeopardizing your health and safety. If mechanical methods are not present, ask for help.

Get in the habit of practicing safe lifting techniques. Following these simple measures can prevent a potentially serious back injury.
This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization: ________________________________________________

Trainer: _________________________ Trainer’s Signature: ____________

Class Participants:

Name: ___________________ Signature: ________________ Date: _______

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Remember to load your completed trainings into the Risk Management Center.