



Toolbox Talks

Material Handling



Handling materials can involve diverse operations such as hoisting tons of steel with a crane, driving a truck loaded with concrete blocks, carrying bags or materials manually, and stacking palletized bricks or other materials such as drums, barrels, kegs, and lumber.

➤ Use caution when manually handling material.

- If lifting is required to move a load, remember to bend at the knees, not at the waist.
- To prevent injury from attempting to lift oversize loads, seek help when loads are so bulky that it cannot be grasped properly, when you can't see around or over a load when carrying it, or anytime you can't handle a load safely by yourself.
- When placing blocks under a raised load, be careful to ensure that the load is not released before removing your hands from under the load.

Wear appropriate PPE for all material handling work tasks, which may include:

- Gloves, when unpacking crates and handling materials to protect from lacerations
 - Steel-Toed Boots, to protect feet when handling heavy loads that could fall
 - Safety Glasses, when cutting banding, strapping or shrink wrap
 - Hard Hats, to protect yourself from struck-by or falling object hazards
- Beware of laceration and puncture hazards when packing or unpacking crates or boxes.
- Watch for protrusions such as nails, screws, staples, splintering wood, broken boards, and metal banding or straps.
 - When cutting shrink wrap, boxes or other material, direct the blade away from your face and body.

Using mechanical equipment, like forklifts, to move and store materials increases the potential for employee injuries. **Important! Only trained and authorized workers are allowed to operate forklifts.**

➤ **Do not exceed the maximum load capacity when moving materials with equipment.**

When moving materials with a forklift:

- Center the load on the forks as close to the mast as possible to minimize the potential for the truck tipping or the load falling.
- Have clear visibility of the work area and ensure you have enough clearance when raising, loading, and operating a forklift.

