

## DuPage County Environmental, Safety, Health & Property Loss Control Program

### Safe Lifting and Carrying of Objects-Safety Tips

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**Purpose:** To provide instructions on proper lifting of an object to prevent injuries.

#### **Points to Protect Your Back:**

Proper methods of lifting and handling protect against injury. Proper lifting makes work easier. You need to "think" about what you are going to do before bending to pick up an object. Over time, this safe lifting technique will become a habit.

1. **Size up the load and check overall conditions.** Don't attempt the lift by yourself if the load appears to be too heavy or awkward. Check that there is enough space for movement, and that the footing is good. "Good housekeeping" ensures that you won't trip or stumble over an obstacle.
2. **Make certain that your balance is good.** Feet should be shoulder width apart, with one foot *beside* and the other foot *behind* the object that is to be lifted.
3. **Tighten your abdominal muscles.** The abdominal cavity, consists of the abdominal muscles in front, the diaphragm and ribs above the pelvic floor below. Pressure in the abdomen that helps share the loads placed upon the spine.
4. **Bend the knees; don't stoop.** Keep the back straight, but not vertical. (There is a difference, tucking in the chin straightens the back.)
5. **Grip the load with the palms of your hands and your fingers.** The palm grip is much more secure.
6. **Tuck in the chin** again to make certain your back is straight before starting to lift.
7. **Use your body weight to start the load moving, and then lift by pushing up with the legs.** This makes full use of the strongest set of muscles.
8. **Keep the arms and elbows close to the body while lifting.**
9. **Carry the load close to the body.**
10. **To change direction,** shift your foot position and turn your whole body, **do not twist.**
11. **Watch where you are going!**
12. **To lower the object, bend the knees. Don't stoop.** To deposit the load on a bench or shelf, place it on the edge and push it into position. Make sure your hands and feet are clear when placing the load.

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#### **Team lifting must be coordinated:**

- If the weight, shape, or size of an object makes the job too much for one person, ask for help.
- Ideally, workers should be of approximately the same size for team lifting.
- One individual needs to be responsible for control of the action to ensure proper coordination. If one worker lifts too soon, shifts the load, or lowers it improperly, either they or the person working with them may be injured.
- Coordinate and Coordinate to avoid injuring the other.

#### **Lifting heavy objects :**

- Safe lifting of heavy items requires training and practice.
- The secret lies in taking the proper stance and grip.
- When equipment is available, it should be used to lift and carry heavy objects.
- Loaders, forklifts, hoists, etc. are made for this purpose.

**To stay healthy make it a habit to follow the above steps when lifting anything-even a relatively light object.**