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Your Safety Matters

This information letter is distributed to those people who are ensuring that their workplace is safe and healthy. This includes members of OHS Committees, OHS Representatives, Safety Officers, Supervisors, Managers and Directors. "Your Safety Matters" was formerly "Committee Member" - a free information letter which has been distributed since 1996.

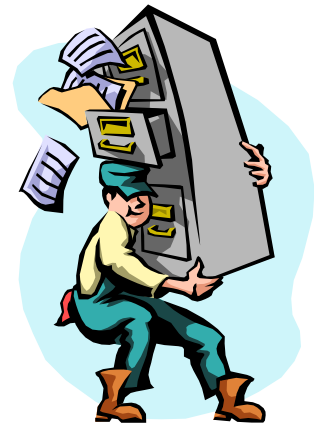
Manual Handling Tasks

Here are some steps that you could do to help identify manual handling tasks in your workplace that might result in injuries to employees.

1. Look at what people are doing when they do a manual handling task that might cause an injury. Does the task involve such things as;

- awkward or cramped posture
- bending
- twisting
- stretching
- reaching
- lifting
- pulling
- pushing
- carrying
- holding

- handling awkward objects
- moving heavy weights
- vibration
- exerting a lot of effort
- doing the same thing for a long time
- rushing around
- poor lighting
- slippery or uneven surfaces
- clutter or trip hazards



2. Consider what might happen if there was a change in conditions at the workplace such as;

- it rains
- it is very cold
- it is very hot
- some staff are sick or on holidays
- a new person starts
- a short, tall or new person does the task
- the work has to be rushed for an important client



3. Discuss the task with the employees who do it to see if they have any concerns about injury or experience physical problems.
4. Check the records in your workplace for manual handling injuries or reports of pain or discomfort.

If you have identified risky tasks then your next step would be to assess and eliminate or control the risks. See clauses 5 and 79 - 81 of the OHS Regulation 2001.

This publication provides general information about ohs. It is not a legal opinion and does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law to be applied to a particular problem.

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