

CONCRETE

SASK

SAFETY BULLETIN: Lifting Safety

What About Proper Lifting Techniques?

According to the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association improper lifting techniques are a major cause of back injuries in the industry each year. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics one fourth of all workers compensation indemnity claims are a result of back injuries. Low back pain is one of the most common reasons people miss work, second only to the common cold. More importantly, this problem causes unnecessary discomfort and pain to workers, which can have a devastating effect on their lifestyle and ability to work. Injuries due to improper lifting techniques can be prevented if we take the time to "Think First" before lifting.

Basic Lifting Technique

Recommendations Concrete producers need to ensure that all employees understand safe lifting procedures. First, stand as close to the object as possible with a wide stance. Place one foot forward and to the side of the object for balance. Keep your back straight, rear-end out and use your legs to lower down. Put your furthest foot hand on the side of the object furthest away. Grasp the object on the opposite corner with the other hand firmly. Prepare to lift by tightening your core, look forward and up with a straight, strong back. Lift slowly with the load close to your body, by extending your legs, back straight and breath out as you lift.

Actions

Considerations for safe lifting practices:

- Think first
- Know or test the object's weight
- Plan the lift and clear your path
- Get help with heavy or awkward objects
- Pivot your feet to avoid twisting
- Don't hold your breath
- Don't use a partial grip (1 or 2 fingers)
- Don't obstruct vision when carrying
- Lift with a steady motion, don't jerk
- Be extra careful on wet or uneven ground
- Set the load down with the same lifting technique

Resources: NRMCA
www.concretesask.org