

Safety Matters **Trucking**

Provided by: SCS Agency Inc

Safe Lifting Tips for Heavy Loads

At work, much of your day is spent lifting, carrying and transporting heavy objects. While in many cases a machine does the grunt work, it only takes one careless mistake to sustain a serious, long-term injury due to improper lifting technique. The following safety tips will give you helpful ergonomic guidelines for lifting any size load.

Before Lifting:

- If you are lifting a heavy object from the loading dock to a vehicle, make sure all the wheels are chocked before picking up the load.
- Make sure the transition from loading dock to trailer is smooth and that any dock levelers can withstand the weight of you and your load.
- Consider whether you will need a second person or a machine to help you with the load.
- Consider whether the size or shape of the load creates additional challenges.
- Determine if you will have to turn or change direction while carrying the load.
- Find out if the route you will take with the load is clear of obstructions and slip, trip or fall hazards.

Ground Level Lifting:

- Get as close as possible to the load, keeping it against your body and lifting with your legs.

- Bend from the knees not the back.
- Get a good grip on the object.

Overhead Lifting:

- Stand on a stable surface.
- Take the object off the shelf or support carefully, maintaining your balance.
- Bring the load down to waist level while maintaining control.
- Avoid reaching and lifting at the same time.

Carrying:

- Look ahead instead of down to make sure your path is clear.
- Always walk forward instead of backward, especially on or near loading docks.
- Avoid stairs if possible.
- Have someone else open doors, gates or other closed entries for you.
- Change direction by moving your feet, not your hips.
- Keep shoulders, hips and feet aligned –



do not twist at the waist or change direction by moving your hips instead of your feet.

- Set the load down if it becomes too heavy or unstable.

Setting Loads Down:

- Bend at your knees, not your waist.
- Set down the corner or edge of the object closest to you first, keeping your fingers out from under the load.