Back Safety Prevention

Common Causes of Back Injuries

♦ Lifting materials that are too heavy or unstable
♦ Lifting objects to or from awkward locations (for example, placing over-head or lifting from the ground)
♦ Pushing, pulling or lifting carelessly
♦ Repetitive twisting, bending, reaching overhead, or lifting
♦ Working for long periods in a bent over or strained position
♦ Falling
♦ Tripping over items
♦ Wearing tool belts that are too heavy
♦ Lifting or doing any physical labor when you haven't "warmed up."

Proper Lifting Techniques

For questions contact
the Safety Office
858-627-7174

San Diego Unified
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Avoiding Back Injuries

The best way is to plan the job to reduce the need for lifting, twisting, bending, or reaching overhead. Change how the job is done, or change the tools you use

♦ Store materials off the ground, so you don't have to bend so much to lift.
♦ Store materials where there is space to lift them safely, without reaching or twisting.
♦ Have materials delivered close to where they will be used.
♦ Split up large loads into smaller, lighter loads.
♦ Change the setup of the job. (Perhaps adjust the angle and height of work surfaces.)
♦ Use a manual lifting or carrying device (like a dolly, hand truck, pry bar, or hook).
♦ Use a mechanical lifting device (like a fork-lift, hoist, crane, or block and tackle).
♦ Use tools that minimize bending and reaching (like tools with longer handles).
♦ Make sure walkways are kept clear to allow the use of material handling devices like carts and dollies.

REMEMBER

LIFT WITH YOUR LEGS NOT YOUR BACK

Back Belts

⚠ WARNING

Heavy object.
To avoid muscle strain or back injury, use lifting aids and proper lifting techniques when removing or replacing.

♦ Back belts do not mitigate the hazards to workers posed by repeated lifting, pushing, pulling, twisting or bending
♦ Most research shows that a back belt will not protect you from back injuries
♦ Leaving the back belt on for extended period can actually increase the chance of being injured when you have to lift something without the belt
♦ If using a back belt, it should be in conjunction with proper lifting techniques
♦ The use of back belts may create a false sense of security, increasing the risk of lifting excessive loads
♦ Remove or loosen the back belt when not lifting

Are You Lifting Safely?

♦ Remember that proper lifting techniques cannot protect you if the object is too heavy, awkward to hold, or cannot be held close to the body.
♦ Face the object. Place one foot behind the object and the other foot beside it.
♦ Bend your knees but keep your back straight. Grip the object firmly with both hands.
♦ Bring the object close to your body. Keep your chin, elbows, and arms tucked in tight. Keep your body weight directly over your feet.
♦ Lift with your legs
♦ Do the same process in reverse when you set the object down.
♦ Avoid any twisting motions.