

# North Dakota State University

## Back Safety/Safe Lift Program

### I. Introduction

Improper use and lifting/handling of materials and equipment of various sizes and weights can cause injury, disability, or even death. By implementing and following safe practices for lifting/handling materials and equipment, we learn to help prevent injury and safeguard our lives and those of our coworker.

### II. Purpose

To ensure and provide that all employees know and understand the basic procedures for lifting/handling material and equipment properly in order to reduce the risk of a work related injury or death.

### III. Goals

To provide guidelines, training, and education that maximizes personal safety while performing material lifting/handling and proper mechanics.

### IV. Mission

To provide professional services and resources through an effective Back Safety/Lift Program to all employees whose job duties involve lifting. It is also our mission to ensure that North Dakota State University will provide a safe and secure place to live, work and visit.

### IV. Back Safety/Safe Lift Program Requirements

#### 1. Top Level Management Approval

The University President's Safety Policy Statement is a commitment to provide a safe and healthy environment for all of its employees. With the employee's needs as the main objective, this program also aims to improve cost containment through safety training and claims management principles and practices.

#### 2. Program Administrator

- a. Administer and implement the Safe Lift Program
- b. Preside over the Safe Lift Committee at quarterly meetings
- c. Develop, identify and conduct all of the requirements in the Back Safety/Safe Lift Program per the requirements set forth by the North Dakota Risk Management Workers Compensation Premium Reduction Program

#### 3. Departments

- a. Identify operations involving lifting or material handling that may place individuals at risk for injury
- b. Initiate appropriate engineering controls to reduce the risk of injury
- c. Provide worker training in proper lifting, material handling methods and techniques
- d. Follow proper work techniques and safe operating procedures

4. **Supervisors**
  - a. Ensure that all workers are trained in proper lifting, material handling methods and techniques
  - b. Ensure that workers follow proper work techniques and safe operating procedures
  
5. **Safe Lift Committee**
  - a. Meet quarterly
  - b. Review the Loss History Report and make recommendations on prevention and corrective actions to reduce risk of injury
  
6. **Loss History from Workforce Safety & Insurance**
  - a. NDSU Safety Office and Safe Lift Committee will review the Loss History Report as it relates to back and lifting injuries
  
7. **Conduct hazard and risk assessments**
  - a. Review and analyze the injury and illness records
  - b. Identify work task/hazard that could cause or contribute to a lift-related injury
  - c. Identify affected employees/departments through observation and information gathering
  - d. Document findings in the Written Ergonomic Assessment Plan
  
8. **Corrective Action/Control Measures**
  - a. Identify corrective action/control methods through the assessment process and investigations
    - i. *Engineering Controls* are the physical changes to jobs that control exposure to muscular skeletal disorders (MSD) and lift hazards, and where feasible, are the preferred methods for controlling MSD hazards. Examples of engineering controls for MSD hazards include changing, modifying, and redesigning the following:

1. Workstations	4. Equipment
2. Tools	5. Materials
3. Facilities	6. Processes
    - ii. *Work Practice Controls* are controls that reduce the likelihood of exposure to MSD hazards through alteration of the manner in which a job or physical work activity is performed. Examples may include:
      1. Proper work techniques and safe operating procedures that are understood and followed by managers, supervisors, and employees
      2. Conditioning period for new or reassigned employees
      3. Training in the recognition of MSD hazards and work techniques that can reduce exposure or ease task demands and burdens
    - iii. *Administrative Controls* are procedures and methods, typically instituted

by the employer, that significantly reduce daily exposure to MSD hazards by altering the way in which work is performed. Examples may include:

1. Employee rotation
2. Adjustment of work space
3. Redesigned work methods
4. Alternative tasks
5. Rest breaks

*iv. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*

1. Back belts when indicated for specific lifts
2. Gloves to assist with gripping

- b. Corrective actions will be identified through the assessments and investigation process and identified in the Written Ergonomic/Safe Lift Assessment Plan.

**9. Action Plan**

Complete written plan to include the results of the hazard and risk assessment, control methods and identified corrective action.

**10. Training on Back Safety**

Program provides an overview on back safety to all employees (even if their job duties do not include heavy lifting) to assist in protecting employees from spur of the moment, unsafe lifting through the Mandatory Annual Baseline Safety Training.

This program provides safe lift training for new employees, whose job responsibilities and tasks include lifting. This includes periodic (at least annually) refresher training through the Mandatory Annual Baseline Safety Training.

Employees are given information and trained on alternative material handling equipment and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as needed. See [Material Handling Safe Operating Procedure](#).

Employees involved in the implementation of the Safe Lift Program will participate in the ND WSI sponsored Safe Lift Program webinar within the first 90 days of the premium renewal.

**11. Measuring Success of the Program**

Evaluation of the program and controls are conducted periodically, and at least once a year to ensure administration, management and compliance with requirements. The Loss History Report will be monitored at least quarterly by the Safe Lift Committee and twice per year by the NDSU Loss Control Committee. Recommendation for corrective action and control methods will be provided by both committees.

## 12. Guidelines for Safe Lift/Handling

- a. Avoid lifting and bending whenever possible.
- b. Plan the work to eliminate unnecessary lifting/carrying.
- c. Place heavier objects on shelves at waist level, lighter objects on lower or higher shelves.
- d. Organize the work so that the physical demands and work pace increase gradually.
- e. Know your intended route. Working surfaces are to be adjusted to the correct height and walking surfaces level and well lit. Clear a pathway before you transport material.
- f. Test the load for stability and weight. If the object is too bulky or weighs 50 lbs. or more, get assistance or use a mechanical lift. Make sure all powered equipment and rigging is rated for a safe load limit. Do not exceed the manufacturer's recommended safe working load.
- g. Use cranes, hoists, lift tables and other lift assist devices whenever possible.
- h. Use handles and lifting straps.
- i. Wear appropriate shoes to avoid slips, trips, or falls.
- j. Take a balanced stance, feet shoulder width apart, and put one foot slightly in front of the other.
- k. Get a secure grip, using both hands whenever possible and use your palms, not just your fingers to get a secure grip on the load. Make sure you'll be able to maintain a hold on the object without switching your grip later. Use gloves if necessary.
- l. Keep load close to your body, lift gradually using your legs, and tighten the abdominal muscles as you lift, while maintaining the three natural curves of your spine.
- m. Keep your head up and look straight ahead while making the lift.
- n. Use your legs to push up and lift the load. Do not use the upper body or back.
- o. Do not twist your body. Step to one side or the other and turn your whole body.
- p. Lower the load by bending at the knees and keeping the back straight.
- q. Alternate heavy lifting or forceful exertion tasks with less physically demanding tasks.
- r. Push instead of pull when moving a load.

Exercise also plays an important role in keeping your back strong, healthy and flexible. A properly exercised back is less likely to be injured, so do not take unnecessary chances.

September 3, 2013

## A message from the President

### SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

North Dakota State University is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all of its employees. To facilitate this objective, NDSU has established a safety and risk management program which places a high priority on the prevention of accidents and injuries, quality health care for injured employees and a return to work assistance program. With the employee's needs as the main objective, the program also aims to improve cost containment through safety training and claims management principles and practices.

Administrative and supervisory personnel are responsible for an expanded role in the development of and compliance with the safety and risk management program. They will provide the incentive and full support for all safety rules and procedures, training, and elimination of hazardous practices. They will keep fully informed on all health and safety issues to constantly review the effectiveness of the program. Only by doing this will employees have the total confidence that we are providing for their safety and health.

Supervisory personnel are directly responsible for the education and participation of all employees under their supervision for safety rules and procedures compliance in their job tasks; taking immediate corrective measures in the prevention of accidents, whether personal injury or property damage; and eliminating hazardous conditions and practices. The supervisor must enforce the established safety and risk management program by promoting a higher level of safety awareness through positive leadership and reinforcement. Supervisors will not permit safety to be sacrificed for any reason, be it production, time limitations, or unexpected problems.

The success of the safety and risk management program will be dependent on each employee's active participation and cooperation in every aspect of the program.

Sincerely,



Dean L. Bresciani  
NDSU President