Mechanical Failure Leads to Projector Screen to Fall Onto Employee

In a classroom, students were being shown a movie clip on a projector screen by a teaching assistant. The projector screen is the manual type that opens or retracts by pulling the pull cord. The screen is supported by two wall mounted brackets with steel S-hooks, as shown in the picture. After the movie clip, the teaching assistant went to retract the screen when suddenly the screen’s metal housing slid off the S-hooks and fell onto the employee's back. Both S-hooks were found to be deformed due to prolonged use. The employee sustained minor injuries.

To prevent similar incidents in the future:

- Prior to using a projector screen, employees should inspect the hooks, wall brackets, and screen’s general structure to ensure that they are in good condition and free of damage.
  - If something looks wrong or is in an unsafe condition, immediately report it to your supervisor or building coordinator and have it tagged out of service.
    - Do not operate a projector screen if it looks tilted or defective.
- Use care when pulling the pull cord to open or retract the screen. Using excessive force on the pull cord can lead to gradual deterioration or damage the hooks and wall brackets.
  - To open the screen, pull the cord down until the screen is opened fully and is in the locked position.
    - Use a pull rod to get easy access if the screen is mounted out of reach.
  - To retract the screen, pull down the cord about 4 inches to disengage the locking mechanism and guide the screen back into the metal housing.
    - Do not permit the screen surface to retract uncontrolled.
- Projector screens should be mounted in a fashion suggested by the manufacturer. Ensure that mounting equipment is approved to handle the weight and force of the screen being opened and retracted regularly.
- Building Coordinators should include projector screen integrity in their normal inspection routines (where applicable).