Housekeeping & Storage - Housekeeping is everyone’s responsibility, and maintaining a clean and safe work area is key to preventing employee injuries, building fires, and chemical spills.

- Maintain clear exit paths at all times
- Do not block emergency equipment, such as eyewash stations, fire alarms & extinguishers, and electrical panels
- Limit quantities of stored materials, especially chemicals and combustible materials
- Do not store materials within 18” of a sprinkler head, as this impedes their performance. Do not store combustible materials within 24” of a non-sprinklered ceiling.

How to Lift Safely - Safe lifting and material handling means keeping your back aligned and balanced when lifting. With a little practice, precautionary methods outlined below can become good daily habits that could help prevent back injuries both on and off the job.

Before lifting, take a moment to think about what you’re about to do. Examine the object for sharp corners, slippery spots or other potential hazards. Know your limit and don’t try to exceed it. Ask for help if needed, or divide the load to make it lighter. Know where you are going to set the item down and make sure your path is free from obstruction. Then follow these steps:

1. Stand close to the load with your feet spread apart about shoulder width, with one foot slightly in front of the other for balance.
2. Squat down bending at the knees (not your waist). Tuck your chin while keeping your back as vertical as possible.
3. Get a firm grasp of the object before beginning the lift.
4. Begin slowly lifting with your LEGS by straightening them.
5. Once the lift is complete, keep the object as close to the body as possible. As the load’s center of gravity moves away from the body, there is a dramatic increase in stress to the lower back.

To place the object below the level of your waist, follow the same procedures in reverse order. Remember, keep your back as vertical as possible and bend at the knees.

Be extra cautious of lifts that require twisting, reaching, awkward handholds, or unstable footing. If you must turn while carrying the load, turn using your feet - not your torso. When manually moving materials, you should seek help when a load is:

- so bulky it cannot be properly grasped or lifted
- when you cannot see around or over it
- when a secure grip cannot be attained
- too heavy for your comfort

Material Handling Aids - Carts, bins, hand trucks, dollies, and forklifts are all mechanical aids that can help transport a load without putting undue strain on your back. Pushcarts and bins can be useful for light, awkward loads, while hand trucks and forklifts can help move heavier, stackable material. Secure the load for transport, then push the load, don’t pull it.

Personal Protective Equipment - Workers should use appropriate protective equipment as necessary to help reduce accident potential. For loads with sharp or rough edges, wear gloves or other hand and forearm protection. To avoid injuries to the eyes, wear safety glasses. When the loads are heavy or bulky, the mover should also wear steel-toed safety boots to prevent foot injuries if the worker accidentally drops a load.

Training
Employee training is available through the Department of Environmental Health & Safety and the University Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Program - http://hr.cornell.edu/benefits/medical_leaves/mipp.html
# Toolbox Safety Talk

**Material Handling**

Date: _______________  Start Time: _______________  End Time: _______________

Location: ______________________________________________________________________________________

Presenter Name: _______________________________________________________________________________

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Please return sign-in sheet to Environmental Health & Safety for recordkeeping.

Environmental Health & Safety
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V.4/15/11