



SAFETY ALERT # 2



Week of August 8th, 2005

In the interest of keeping everyone safe CAM Safety will be sharing injury information with preliminary root cause analysis. This information is intended to make you think not assess blame. If you have an incident that you would like to share send us the information and we will pass it along.

What Happened

Four workers were lifting a 400lb pump in to place when they lost their grip on it. The last guy to get his fingers out ended up with the weight of the pump pinching the tendon in his left ring finger. He was off of work for several weeks while going through physical therapy. The company's safety committee determined that they should have been using mechanical means (i.e. chainfall) to set the pump instead of trying to do it by hand.

Best Practices

Material handling, especially lifting, is one of the most common causes of employee injury. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than one million workers suffer back injuries (from improper lifting) each year, and back injuries account for one of every five workplace injuries or illnesses. Further, one-fourth of all compensation indemnity claims involve back injuries, costing industry billions of dollars on top of the pain and suffering borne by employees. The case cited above is yet another hazard of improper lifting.

OSHA Suggestions

- Training in safe lifting techniques
- Physical conditioning or stretching programs
- Reducing the size or weight of the object being lifted
- Adjusting the height of a pallet or shelf
- Mechanical aids such as pneumatic lifts, conveyors, and/or automated equipment

Some helpful websites

- <http://www.pp.okstate.edu/ehs/links/back.htm>
- http://www.michigan.gov/documents/CIS_WSH_talk1_73150_7.htm
- http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=FACT_SHEETS&p_id=146
- http://www.osha.gov/dts/osta/otm/otm_vii/otm_vii_1.html

Final Note:

According to one study it was determined that at least one-third of compensable back injuries could be prevented through better job design (ergonomics).

Joe Forgue ARM, ASP

Manager of Education and Safety Services

CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN (CAM)

(248) 972-1141 direct

forgue@cam-online.com
