PREVENTING BACK INJURIES

Back strains are the most frequent on-the-job injury occurring in the workplace. However, most back injuries are preventable. Follow these simple lifting techniques to help prevent back injuries.

**GUIDELINES**

+ Keep your back straight.
+ Keep the load close to your body.
+ Use your legs to lift. Bend your knees, not your waist.
+ Test the weight of the object to be lifted. Can it be handled safely?
+ Don’t twist when lifting.
+ Think about the lift. What will make the lift safe? The greatest cause of back injuries is habit. Most workers lift incorrectly because they do not consciously think about lifting.

+ Watch others use safe lifting practices and consciously break bad lifting habits.
+ Use mechanical or ergonomic devices if lifts are frequent. Devices that minimize the number of lifts, the lifting distance and the lifting load weight include conveyors, hoists, fork-lifts, adjustable pallet lifts, and lift assists.