

MODULE 1-07

LIFTING

ALL EMPLOYEES ARE TO BE TRAINED PROIR TO USING ANY EQUIPMENT

I. Purpose

A. Lifting is a part of our day-to-day activities. It is also the number one cause of injury within parks. Proper lifting techniques can prevent injuries. It shouldn't surprise you to hear that back injuries account for 20% of all workplace injuries ... and 25% of all workers' comp claims.

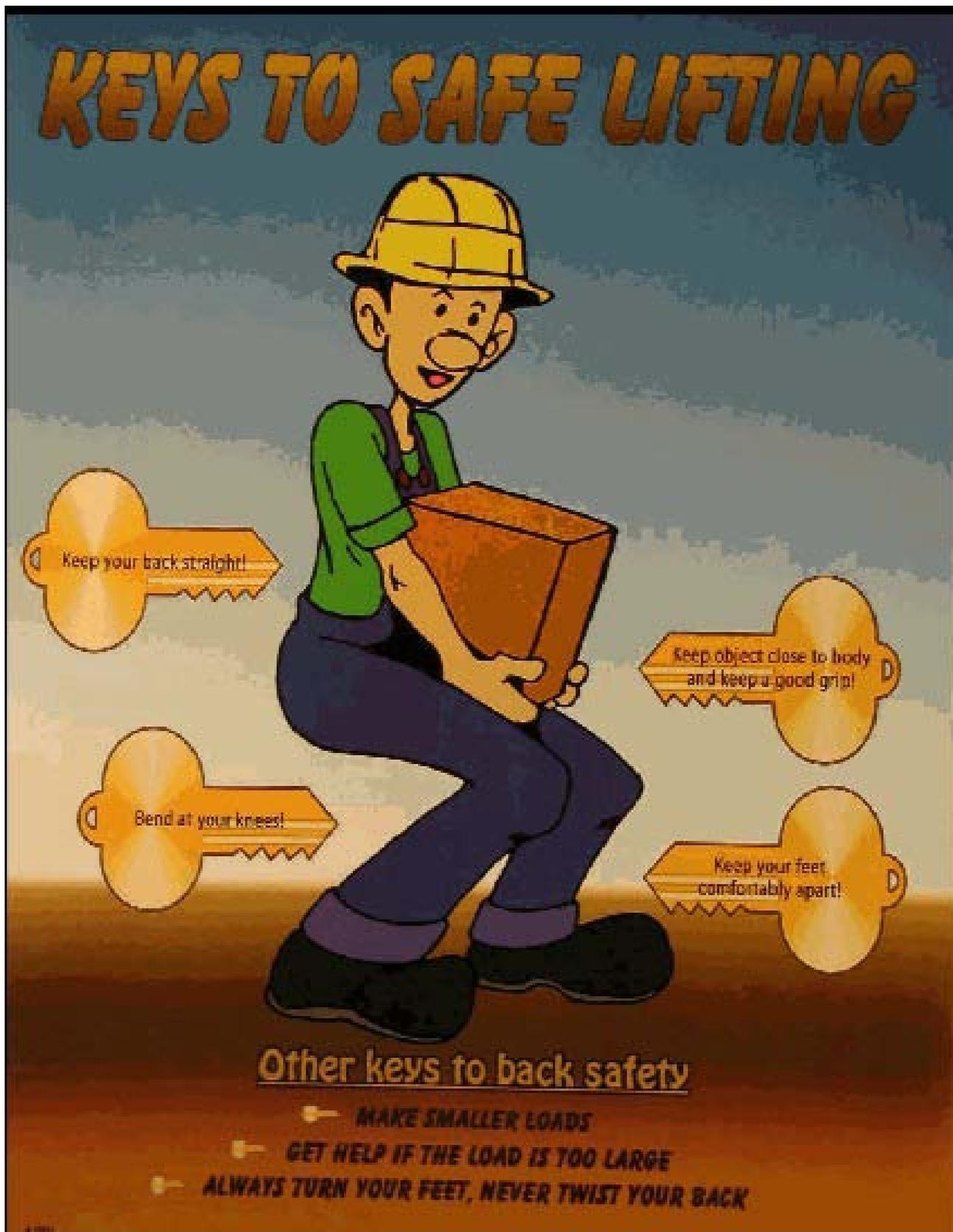
Why is this such a common problem? Because back injuries can be caused by so many of the activities that workers do every day.

B. The seven main causes of back injuries:

1. Lifting
2. Carrying/holding loads
3. Lowering/placing loads
4. Moving loads on wheels or skids
5. Twisting
6. Reaching
7. Falling

Fortunately, training and awareness about back safety can greatly reduce these injuries.





II. How to Lift Properly

A. Before lifting, lift the load mentally and ask yourself these questions:

1. Could I get hurt doing this? How?
2. Is there a better way to do this safely?
3. Am I using the proper equipment to do this?
4. Do I need help (a buddy) to do this safely?
5. Are there obstacles underfoot, overhead, spills, lighting, traffic (people and vehicles), or changes in elevation?
6. Where is the safest, clearest route over the flattest surface, even if it takes longer?

B. Lift Properly Using Good Body Mechanics:

1. Face load straight on and align body with load.
2. Feet planted on stable surface, comfortably wide spread (good base of support), one foot slightly forward of other to provide better balance.
3. Set stomach muscles, tighten buttocks, pull in abdomen and use leg muscles to lift.
4. Back muscles are designed to hold vertebrae in alignment.
5. Bend knees & squat, keeping head up & back straight.
6. Keep your back in its natural alignment and use your leg muscles to lift load.

C. Get Close to Load:

1. Hug load to body using arms & hands to grip & hold.
2. Keep load close to body.
3. Push up with legs (strongest set of muscles - big thigh muscles).

D. Controlled Lift, Carry:

1. Lift with deliberate controlled motion: no jerking or twisting.
2. If you need to change direction once load is lifted, change by moving position of feet rather than twisting body.
3. Maintain smooth control & steady breathing as you lift, carry, and lower load.



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E. Lower the Load:

1. Bend knees to lower load.
2. Keep back straight & load close to body as you lower load using arms and leg muscles.
3. Again, no twisting, jerking, dropping.

F. Get Help

If the load is too bulky or heavy for you to lift alone, get help! Don't hesitate to ask someone else for a hand. A moment of help can save you days of disability and pain.



G. Team Lifting

When team lifting, pick one person to call the signals. The leader should direct the team so you all lift together, walk in step, and lower the load together using the lifting principles described above.



H.

Whenever possible, push rather than pull – it is easier on your body.

- I. **Find a Better Way** – Sometimes no one else is around to help or the job is bigger than both of you can lift.



1. Arrange for mechanical help from a pushcart, hand truck, wheelbarrow or forklift. (See picnic table lifter in photo.)
2. Use good lifting techniques when loading mechanical devices.

III. Other Lifting Tips

A. Solve High Load Problems

Lifting from a height above the shoulders can be hazardous. Test the weight by pushing up on the load. Get as close to the load as possible so you can slide the load down your body close to the spine. Use the same techniques for lifting down as you would for lifting up.

B. Solve Repetitive Problems

Don't accept problems as "the way things are." Think through your job task. Do you really need to bend and reach so much or can you think of a better way?

C. Avoid Unstable Loads

They can injure your back and damage the load.

D. Don't try to carry more than you can safely handle.

E. Use mechanical lifting devices, dollies or carts when available to save your body.



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F. Never lift object past shoulder height.

Use a sturdy stool, ladder or get assistance.

G. Never carry a load that blocks your vision.

H. Lift Less and Enjoy the Rewards

Look around your work place for ways to minimize how much you have to lift and how far you have to carry it. Discuss with your supervisor and co-workers ways to make lifting easier, and incorporate these safer methods into your daily routine.

I. Falling

If you fall while carrying an object:

1. Free your hands of anything you are holding. Tools, boxes, and objects can be replaced. You cannot.
2. Try to protect your head, neck, internal organs, and joints.
3. Spread the force of the fall over the fleshy part of your body as much as possible.

IV. Summary of Typical Lifting Injuries Reviewed by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (ORPD) Safety Review Board in 2008:

- Employee was lifting a 4 x 8 sheet of plywood by himself. Injury happened when employee was putting it up on table saw and plywood sheet took off on its own. Tore ligament in left elbow saving the sheet and shop tools.
- Employee was lifting heavy garbage bag into back of truck. Couldn't quite make it over tailgate, so pushed on bag and got stuck by broken glass. SRB question: "Why wasn't the tailgate down?"
- Employee was unloading large piece of beach debris from back of 4 x4 truck bed at Transfer Station. Weight shifted unexpectedly causing the debris to strike employee's left shoulder and left knee while he was attempting to get away.
- Rangers were constructing a loading chute for horse trailers in horse camp area. Employee was underneath the decking part, bracing it, while coworkers lined up the support sides to drill bolt holes. Entire deck shifted, dropping weight onto employee's hands and head. Employee felt sudden pinch in back and neck, can't move to either side, has extreme pain, can't lift shoulders and limited mobility.

V. Demonstration and Proficiency

All persons trained in lifting procedures are required to demonstrate their proficiency prior to signing the training ledger. Trainee must demonstrate proper lifting/un-lifting techniques.

PROFICIENCY TEST

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I. Multiple Choice

1. Lifting properly is an important part of our job because:
 - a) We lift everyday at work and at home.
 - b) It prevents injury.
 - c) Proper lifting is not necessary.
 - d) You never know when someone will ask you for help.
 - e) a and b.

2. You should lift everything _____.
 - a) Mentally
 - b) Physically
 - c) Mentally and physically.
 - d) Neither physically nor mentally.

3. It is important when you are carrying something from one site to another site to:
 - a) Go as fast as you possibly can.
 - b) Plan your steps identifying obstacles.
 - c) a and b.

4. If a load is too heavy for you to lift alone, you should:
 - a) Find a mechanical lifting device.
 - b) Go find someone else to help you.
 - c) Maybe not move it at all.
 - d) All of the above.

II. True/False

5. _____ You should lift with your rear end out and back in.
6. _____ Whenever possible, you should push a load not pull it.
7. _____ If the load is bulky or heavy, get help.
8. _____ When team lifting, you don't need a team leader, you can work well as a group without one.
9. _____ When lowering something from a height over your head, just pull it off the shelf and hope for the best.

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10. _____ Keeping the load close to your body helps your spine support the weight.
11. _____ Once you are properly positioned to lift the load, you should abruptly stand up.
12. _____ Your abdominal muscles are not important in lifting.

III. Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to keep your rear end out and your lower back in while lifting?
2. What can you do to minimize the amount of lifting you would do on the job?

Employee Name: _____ Pass _____ No Pass _____ Date: _____

Take this test to your supervisor or trainer for sign off.