



TODAY'S SAFETY TALK – TRAINING SESSIONS TO PREVENT INJURIES AND INCIDENTS

TAKE A MINUTE FOR YOUR SAFETY

STORAGE

Storage Hazards

When storing items, take care to reduce hazards. Hazards can range from falling items; unstable storage racks; strains from lifting, twisting, or reaching; obstruction; and tripping exposures. Although storage might seem simple, if we don't give it careful thought, these hazards can become severe.

Fortunately, these risks can be safely controlled. Your health and safety are important to us; we don't want you to get hurt.

Storage Tips and Best Practices

- Always use a step stool or ladder to store or retrieve items that are kept at height. Do not use chairs or boxes or climb on the shelves. [*Instructor prompt:* Ask employees if there are any storage rooms or locations without an easily accessible step stool or ladder. Once reported, make sure one is provided inside or nearby.]
- Make sure shelves, racks, cabinets, and stored items are secure. Tipping shelves, cabinets or falling items can cause serious injury and damage equipment. [*Instructor prompt:* ask about storage that may be tippy or methods to secure storage and reporting of unsafe storage.]
- When storing items, be aware of fire sprinklers. Items positioned too close to them can affect their operation. Maintain at least 18 inches of clearance below sprinkler heads.
- Position heavy or bulky items lower on the shelves to improve stability and reduce lifting or twisting hazards.
- Avoid storing heavy or awkward items above shoulder height.
- When lifting storing or retrieving an object:
 - Plan the route and ask for help if you need someone to hold doors or assist with the lift.
 - Face the load and bend at the knees rather than the waist.
 - Avoid twisting. Instead pivot your feet to change directions.
 - Lift with slow continuous pressure, rather than quick lifts.
 - Carry the lift close to your body directly in front of you if you can see where you are going.

- Use hands or knees to build a bridge for additional support and to take weight off your back for small items. [*Instructor prompt: view the image to the right and model it or have an employee get up and demonstrate the technique.*]
- Use carts or other devices when moving large amounts of materials. This reduces the strain on your body. But don't overload the cart to where you cannot see the path ahead.
- Items frequently accessed should be positioned in an easy to reach area.
- Avoid storing items that protrude into walkways. If it is unavoidable, reduce the hazard with cushioning, flagging or other means.
- Sharp edges protruding into walkways should be guarded, rounded down or otherwise addressed to prevent cuts. If unable to correct the hazard, it should be reported.
- Emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers, eyewash stations, first-aid kits, electrical panels and disconnects must be kept clear and unobstructed. Blocking these safety devices can affect their operation and delay response in an emergency.
 - Electrical panels must have at least 36 inches of clearance in front and 30 inches wide or the width of the panel, whichever is larger.
- Avoid storing items in boiler or mechanical rooms. These rooms often contain equipment, electrical breaker panels or other devices that require clear space around them so staff can tend to the equipment.
 - Storing items in these rooms can also increase the hazards for slips, trips, and falls and delay responses in the event of an emergency in addition to increasing the fire risk.

Reporting

- Maintaining safe storage is everyone's responsibility. If you see something that seems wrong, fix it, or report it to a supervisor or member of management to address the hazard.

TAKE A MINUTE FOR YOUR SAFETY SIGN-IN SHEET

COUNTY/AGENCY: _____

DATE OF TRAINING: _____ PRESENTER: _____

TOPIC(S): _____

Print Name

Signature

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