



H S E

HEALTH SAFETY ENVIRONMENTAL



Alert #: SA 31-23

Date: August 9, 2023

Manual Material Handling

There has been an increase of incidents being reported in regards to manual lifting and material handling. Handling of materials is a function that almost every employee performs as a part of their regular work, either by hand or with mechanical help. It also accounts for 20 to 25 percent of all occupational injuries. Musculoskeletal disorders or, strains, sprains, fractures, and bruises are the most common injuries. The primary manual material handling hazards that lead to these types of injuries are:

- **Forceful exertion** - This involves lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, and carrying heavy objects or materials.
- **Repetitive tasks** - The material-handling task may not necessarily be heavy, but if it is very repetitive with little rest and recovery, it can lead to muscle fatigue and injury to the musculoskeletal system.
- **Fixed or awkward postures and positions** - The task may not be heavy or repetitive, but if it involves a fixed or awkward position, the body will be at a mechanical disadvantage and therefore at a greater risk of injury. Awkward body positions might include bending forwards or backwards, twisting sideways, leaning to the side, or lifting, pushing, or pulling with the hands above the shoulder or below the knees.

With the record breaking heat we're experiencing this year, we're faced with additional risk factors such as dehydration, heat exhaustion, dropped items from sweat, etc. Even a lift that is very "typical or common" and part of your everyday routine can be complicated by the additional factors listed above.

Please take the time to assess the task and ask for help even if moving something that you know you can lift on your own, especially later in the day as fatigue has usually started to affect all individuals exposed to the ambient heat.

For additional information regarding this alert, please contact the Corporate HSE department.



**Report all incidents immediately to the GIS Hotline
1-855-543-5163**

Following your initial phone call, an incident report **must** be completed and e-mailed to:

incident@gisy.com

SAFETY ALERT