

**SAFETY
MATTERS**
RISK
MANAGEMENT
NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE **APRIL 05, 2024**

- **BEST PRACTICES IN WAREHOUSE DUTIES**
- **PREVENT SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS ON WORKING AREAS**
- **TIPS FOR STORAGE AND FIRE PREVENTION**

WAREHOUSE SAFETY

OBJECTIVE Learn about basic Safety Tips to Protect Warehouse Workers

Warehouse work can result in musculoskeletal injuries and strain caused by improper lifting, falls, or collisions with powered equipment or other workers. Here are some tips to avoid injury while working in a warehouse environment.

Unloading Items from Pallets

- Ensure there is space between pallets so workers can step beside the pallet to minimize reaching to the back of the pallet, to allow workers to pick items from the front, and to allow the forklift to turn the pallet to unload the remainder.
- Avoid stepping on the pallet.
- Do not use stacked pallets as platforms to reach higher items.
- Be aware of pinch points and avoid them.

Heavy Items

- Ensure any heavy product is raised to a good picking height off the floor.
- If you must lift an object from a low location, use proper body mechanics by moving items close to the body and use your legs when lifting.
- If possible, use mechanical aids or request help to lift heavy or bulky items.
- Always read product weight before lifting. Consider labeling heavy items if product weight is not listed on the container.



- When you must put a load on a flat surface, make sure there are blocks or shims in place to prevent your fingers from getting pinched.

Aisles and Traffic

- Keep floors and aisles clear of clutter, electrical cords, hoses, spills, and other hazards that could cause slips, trips, or falls.
- Let your co-workers know if you are passing by or behind them (sound your horn, call out). Do not pass a load over another worker.
- Listen for forklift horns. Be watchful around intersections and high traffic areas.
- Follow traffic management rules and be aware of the signs and flashers.
- Stay outside of marked traffic routes.
- Wear a high-visibility vest.
- Maintaining a clean and clutter-free work area is another way to avoid injuries. Store unused pallets, crates, and other materials in designated areas. As a rule, stack unused pallets no more than 6 feet high.

Equipment

- Ensure all forklift operators are competent and have completed certified training. Provide regular refresher training and evaluation when an operator is observed operating the vehicle unsafely.
- Keep clear of dock edges, and always be aware of the activity around you. Pay special attention to the position of forklifts and other workers.

- Never place feet under a pallet jack or hand truck platform.
- Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Picking Items from High Shelves

- Consider using stock-picking carts with ladders attached to avoid lifting objects from above the head.
- Do not climb racks or use the forks of a lift truck as a platform.
- If working at heights above 4 feet, use fall protection systems, such as fall limiters, cables, and harnesses.
- Inspect ladders to identify any visible defects that could cause injury. Always follow manufacture instructions on portable ladder use.

Fire Prevention

- Keep spaces and storage areas uncluttered. Remove all waste materials at the end of every working day and transfer them to outdoor containers. Trash and debris are some of the most flammable materials in a warehouse.
- Keep aisles, and fire exits clear, and properly store all hazardous materials, such as flammable liquids, in a designated storage cabinet.
- Store chemicals away from forklift traffic areas.
- Store items no higher than 18 inches below the sprinkler heads on the fire suppression system.
- Inspect the warehouse daily and document the results. Check that accumulated waste materials have been removed, fire prevention and security systems are working, and any hazardous material or equipment has been stored properly.

Heat Illness Prevention

- Allow new or returning workers to gradually increase workloads and take more frequent breaks as they acclimatize, or build a tolerance for working in the heat.
- Ensure the warehouse is well-ventilated.

Resources

- [OSHA Warehousing Hazards and Solutions](#)
- [Safety Culture - Warehouse Safety](#)
- [Safeopedia - 10 Tips For Increasing Warehouse Safety](#)

This California Schools JPA fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.

