

Manual handling introduction

In accordance with Occupational Health and Safety Best Practice, the purpose of this policy is to minimise the risk and injury associated with manual handling.

Interpretation

For the purpose of this guide, “manual handling” shall be defined as:

“any activity requiring the use of force exerted by person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain a person, animal or thing”

Manual handling also includes any activity involving repetitive and / or forceful movements and any activity where the person must maintain constrained or awkward postures.

Most common manual handling injuries to EnviroPoles cleaners and installers:

- Strains and sprains
- Spinal disorders

Most common manual handling injuries to EnviroPoles cleaners and installers:

- Incorrect lifting and handling EnviroPoles receptacle unit(s) (ERU)
- Incorrect lifting and handling ERU inserts
- Incorrect carrying of ERU and inserts
- Incorrect emptying of ERU inserts
- Incorrect filling of ERU inserts

Most Common manual handling injuries are to the:

- Back
- Knees
- Shoulders
- Trunk
- Limbs
- Elbow

Three Steps to prevent back injuries

Step 1

Identify risk factors in the workplace likely to result in manual handling injuries by reviewing work injury reports, talking to management and employees and observing tasks being done.

Step 2

Assess the risk for each hazard you identified and if it may result in an injury. This will help you prioritise the hazards in order of risk and plan action.

Step 3

Take action to eliminate or minimise the risks. Job redesign is the preferred option. No one single option will necessarily reduce the risk. A combination of different control options may be needed.

When spotting body strain hazards, look for:

- Jobs that involve frequent manual handling. (The risk will be greater where handling is required often, at a fast pace and for long periods of time.)
- Loads to be handled below mid-thigh or above the shoulders. (Heavy or awkward.)
- Loads that weigh too much for one person to carry or move.
- Loads that require the use of force to move
- Uneven or slippery flooring.
- Excessively hot, cold or humid conditions.
- Inadequate lighting.

You should consider:

- Whether there are enough workers to meet deadlines and allow for rest breaks
- Whether particular clothing, such as uniforms or protective equipment, restricts movement or posture.
- Whether workers have been trained for the tasks
- Whether workers are physically capable of the tasks expected of them.

Corrective lifting

When lifting or moving a load, consider not only the weight of the object, but the size and shape, the distance it is to be carried, the height it will have to be lifted, and its position prior to lifting.

In fact, does it need lifting at all? Will it be better to push or pull the load?

Lifting or moving

- Consider the load; size, awkward shape, etc.
- Consider need for mechanical or manual assistance.
- Position legs apart – one foot level with the load.
- Keep back straight, look up.
- Bend from the hips, avoid “twisting” the body.
- Tighten the stomach muscles, but do not hold breath.

Bend the Knees

- Lift with the legs, not the back.
- Keep the load close to the body.
- Keep carrying distance short.
- Avoid changing grip or ‘jerking’ the load.
- Deposit the load by bending the knees and keeping the back straight.
- If pulling or pushing, let the legs do the work.