



## SITE SAFETY MEETING - TOOL BOX TALK

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# Preventing Back Injury

The most common type of employee injury in the work place is sprain or strain of the lower back. Back injuries result from improper lifting, carrying and manual material handling operations.

To help prevent a back injury complete these five simple steps before beginning your next lifting job:

1. **REVIEW WORK TASKS.** If your work requires continuous material handling or heavy lifting then pre-employment physicals, strength testing, as well as physical conditioning and stretching programs will ensure that you are physically fit to perform the job. And, coupled with the proper lifting training you will also be knowledgeable on how to avoid injury to your back.
2. **INSPECT WORK AREAS.** Slips and falls cause many back injuries. Wet or slippery floors, poor housekeeping conditions and improperly maintained stairs, ladders and walking surfaces should be corrected before starting the work to avoid the chance of injury.
3. **USE MECHANICAL LIFTING DEVICES.** Although lifting capabilities vary by individual the potential for injury increases significantly when material to be moved approaches or exceeds 30 pounds or is excessively bulky. The use of material handling equipment will not only reduce your chance of injury, but will also increase productivity.
4. **LIFT WITH YOUR LEGS.** The leg muscles are much stronger than the back muscles. With your back kept straight, load kept close to your body, and using your legs to lift will place less strain on your back muscles and reduce your chance of injury.
5. **HAVE ADEQUATE HELP.** When lifting or moving heavy or awkward items get help. Workers who try to move heavy objects without assistance can exceed their limitations and can injure themselves. Getting help take very little extra time and will reduce the likelihood get injured.

*For additional advice concerning safe material handling, contact your insurance carrier loss control department or Federal or State OSHA*

## Questions to start discussion

1. What are the five steps you should take before your next lifting job?
2. What are some of the site conditions that can cause a lifting accident?
3. How should you lift?
4. What should you do before lifting or moving heavy or awkward items?

### Meeting Notes:

Employee Comments / Concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Safety issues to be addressed on the job: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Training Record:** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Jobsite: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name	Emp #	Signature	Employee Name	Emp #	Signature
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**Tool Box Talks** are employee safety meetings designed to serve as 15 minute on-site training sessions focused on key topics relative to your work.

Site superintendents or foremen are responsible for holding meetings each week usually during a morning break. This important segment of your general safety program encourages open discussion on the topic of the week and allows employees to share their experiences about accidents and safe or unsafe work practices. Recordkeeping is mandatory and all involved must sign off on each session.

Topics for your company could include: electrical safety, excavation and trenching safety, fall protection, scaffold safety, stairway and ladder safety, hazard communication, fire safety, personal protective equipment, tool safety, materials handling, etc.

Sample Tool Box Talks are provided compliments of the Safety Committee of the Hartford County Homebuilders Association. For more information on Tool Box Talks contact The HBA office 860 563-4212. *Tool Box Safety Talks* can be purchased from the National Association of Homebuilders 1-800 368-5242, [www.nahb.com](http://www.nahb.com) or may be available through your business insurance provider.

(Tool Box Talk 8-07; Copy Information taken from Ohio Casualty Group Loss Control Data Guide #LCDG 5114.) The information described in this Toolbox Meeting Topic is general information only, provided to management of insured companies as a guide as to how they might fulfill their responsibilities for the control of loss-producing situations involving their premises and/or operations. Such information is not intended to meet any particular federal, state or local health or safety law or regulation. It does not aim to be complete or to substitute for a safety inspection. The Ohio Casualty Insurance Company and its insurance subsidiaries do not warrant that all risks can be controlled or insured against, or that such risks are covered under the policies written by them. The liability of The Ohio Casualty Insurance Company or its insurance subsidiaries is limited to the specific terms, limits and conditions of each policy as issued.

**BUILD SAFELY – THINK SAFETY**