



Construction Commercial Insurance Profile

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How to Reduce the Risk of Back Injuries On-site

Construction tasks often require working with heavy equipment and being in situations that can cause serious injuries. These tasks, such as lifting heavy objects, can result in debilitating and long-lasting back issues when not properly executed. In fact, manual handling causes over a third of all workplace injuries, according to the Health and Safety Executive. As such, it's important to be aware of any potential risks and know how to prevent these types of injuries.

These tips can help employees reduce their risk of back injuries on-site:

- **Understand how to size up a load.** Before lifting an object, employees should check its weight and decide if they can handle it alone or need assistance.
- **Make sure any potential obstacles are cleared away.** Before a heavy object is lifted, employees should clear the path to reduce tripping and falling risks.
- **Practise proper lifting techniques.** Employees should use their hands to grip the load and position their feet so that one foot is next to the load and one is behind it. They should also get under the load by bending their knees, not their backs. Bending over at the waist to reach for the object can cause serious injury. Employees should also avoid twisting their bodies when lifting. Instead, it's recommended they turn their entire bodies with their feet.
- **Keep loads close to the body.** Heavy objects should never be lifted above the shoulders or below waist level.
- **Lift as a team.** Teamwork is important when lifting large objects. One worker needs to be in a position to observe and direct the other. Lifting and lowering should be done in unison. Lifters should never let the load drop suddenly without warning their partner.
- **Engage in fitness practices.** People who are in poor physical health are at greater risk for back problems.

For further guidance on avoiding workplace injuries, contact us today.