Things to Do Before Training

- Take an inventory of tools (lifts, dollies, carrying handles, etc.) the company has for lifting or carrying heavy loads.
- Review stretching exercises on back of card.

Introduction

Every day we carry materials – light and heavy loads, bend over for tools, hold materials and tools above our heads.

These tasks take their toll. Sprains and strains account for 38% of lost work day injuries in construction.

Back injuries shorten the careers and reduce the quality of life of many construction workers.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What kinds of injuries have you seen that are related to lifting or carrying? How could they have been prevented?
- What tools and equipment do we have that can make lifting or carrying easier?
- What are some of the materials on this job that could be lifted or carried differently?
- How can we arrange for materials to be delivered and placed as close as possible to where they will be used?
ACTIONS TO TAKE

- Practice how to lift by squatting down, keeping your back straight, and lifting with the legs, not the back.
- Practice the stretching exercises below.

Key Points to Keep in Mind

- **Stretching helps to loosen and warm up muscles.** Just as athletes do prior to competition, it is a good idea to warm up your muscles before starting to work.
- **Tools (like a dolly, a lift, or a carrying tool) make the job easier.** Use them.
- It is always **better if two or more people handle heavy materials.**
- **It is easier to lift materials that are at waist level,** so if possible stack materials on an elevated platform.
- **Lifting should be done with the legs,** not the back.
- Pick up your feet and pivot to turn. Don’t twist your back.
- Always set up the job site so that **materials are placed in a safe place as close as possible to where they will be used.**
- **Frequent breaks and rests help cut down on injuries.**
- Don’t have one or two people do all the carrying and lifting; **rotate workers so that everyone gets a break from the heavy work.**