

# Manual Material Handling

Every piece of material that is on a construction site must be moved, put in place, and attached. Getting that material to its designated location is most of the effort. Why not simplify this process with the use of a tool or cart. Wheels make moving material much easier on your back and body. Wheel barrows, hand trucks, and carts are available for about every item on the site. So why carry everything?

## Management Directive

Educate your employees about the risk of injury when moving material around the jobsite. Encourage them to use tools and equipment to help them with material handling.

## OSHA's Materials Handling, Storage, Use, and Disposal Standard

Storage areas shall be kept free from accumulation of materials that constitute hazards from tripping, fire, explosion, or pest harborage. Vegetation control will be exercised when necessary. See 1926.250(c).

## Preparing the Jobsite

To facilitate smooth material movement a jobsite needs to be clear of scattered trash and debris. This creates a hazard for both manual material handling and material handling with assistance. For a wheelbarrow, hand truck, or cart to work there will have to be a clear pathway to roll the material across. Once the material is lifted plan your pathway to where you are going. Once at the entrance to the jobsite, an adequate ramp must be installed to easily roll up the ramp and into the house. Having a clean jobsite is probably the best defense against any material handling injuries.

## Some Tools to Assist

- Wheelbarrow
- Pallet jack
- Hand truck
- Flat bed cart
- Dolly

## Materials that deserve some caution

Transporting gas cylinders, if you are a welder, or are using compressed gas, should be handled carefully. Training should be had before anyone moves compressed gas cylinders. The following procedures should be followed when moving gas cylinders:

- Do not drop cylinders or strike them against one another or against another surface
- Clearly identify what the contents are inside the cylinder with a label
- Always keep the valves hand-tightened until cylinders are securely delivered
- Try not to drag or slide cylinders
- Do not try to lift alone if the cylinder is too heavy

## Lifting technique

When lifting material manually remember correct back safety and lifting technique. Always use your legs, not your back when lifting. Ask for assistance if you need it, and if possible break the load into smaller, easier loads. Take your time and plan your lift. It only takes a second to do serious harm to your back!

Safety Review Quiz

1. What is done to keep pathways clear?
2. What tools are available for safe material handling?
3. Is there a training program for moving compressed gas cylinders?

## Material Handling Sign-Off Sheet

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name	Employee Signature
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