

PROJECT:	
CLIENT/OWNER:	WEEK ENDING:

CREW NAMES:	CREW SIGNATURES:
SAFETY FACTORS ON CURRENT PROJECT:	
WEEKLY FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT:	
FOREMAN:	SIGNATURE:

## LIFTING HEAVY OBJECTS

Back problems are one of the **top ten leading workplace injuries** according to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. They account for 27 percent of all non-fatal injuries involving days away from work. Your back is a complex system made up of numerous muscles, bones, nerves, and supporting tissues. It's a machine you use countless times every day, often in ways you don't even notice. A little know how, however, can enable you to lift correctly.

### PREPARING TO LIFT—

Before you lift any object, stop and consider the various factors and risks involved. If it looks too heavy, don't be afraid to ask for help. Be sure you're wearing safety shoes. There is always the chance of dropping something on your foot. If the object has rough or sharp edges, wear a good, strong pair of work gloves. They'll improve your grip and protect your hands.

### MAKING THE LIFT—

Crouch down with the load between your legs and get a good grip on the object. As you raise your body, lift with your legs, keeping your back vertical, your abdominal muscles tight, and the load as close to you body as possible. If you have to place the load to your left or right, don't twist your body. Move your feet in the required direction instead. When you have to lower a load to the ground surface, simply perform the lifting technique in reverse.

### FITNESS & EXERCISE—

Exercise also plays an important role in keeping your back strong, healthy, and flexible. A properly exercised back is less likely to be injured. Your company safety director, doctor or [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com) can recommend the best exercises for you, taking into account your physical condition and the level of physical effort your job requires.

### BACK BELTS—

Finally, a word about back belts. There's a lot of controversy about using back belts to control low back injuries in workers who don't have an existing injury. According to a report published by the National Safety Council, available scientific data lacks the evidence showing that the use of back belts helps to prevent or control lower back injuries. One thing that is agreed upon is that back belts should never be a substitute for a comprehensive back injury prevention program. Urban Jungle Contractors, Ltd. stance on the use of back belts is this:

*The use of back belts in lifting applications may cause you to develop a false sense of security by wearing the belt. This may lead you to lift loads you wouldn't otherwise lift. Always remember that it is your back doing the work; not the belt! If there is the slightest chance that you think an object may be anywhere close to your lifting limit, don't hesitate to ask for help. •*