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| **CAL-HS-PD-3000** |
| **Manual Handling** |
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| **Procedure** |
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###### Contents

[1.0 PURPOSE 1](#_Toc181035771)

[2.0 ASSESSMENT 1](#_Toc181035772)

[3.0 INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING 1](#_Toc181035773)

[4.0 MANUAL LIFTING TECHNIQUE 1](#_Toc181035774)

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# PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this procedure is to protect operatives from the possibility of:

* Musculoskeletal injuries due to the adoption of incorrect methods of lifting.
* Musculoskeletal injuries from attempting to lift something which is too heavy
* Musculoskeletal injuries due to manual handling a load of an awkward shape.
* Trips and falls due to vision being obscured by a load or poor working environment.
* Cuts and abrasions from a load which is sharp, ragged or rough.
* Injuries caused by a contaminated load, e.g. becoming slippery from oil.
* Injuries due to extremes of temperature.

# ASSESSMENT

1. The employer must, under the “Management” Regulations, make a suitable and sufficient assessment to identify any risks to employees from the manual handling of loads, whether on his own premises or on the premises of others.
2. The assessment must be recorded where the undertaking has five or more employees.
3. The findings of the assessment must be communicated in a comprehensible form to those who may be affected.
4. Consideration should be given to special category employees, e.g. young persons or expectant mothers, as well as to the physical ability of the individual.

# INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING

1. Any employee identified in the assessment as being at risk must be given suitable and sufficient information and instruction on the risk to which he is exposed, and the measures introduced by the employer to control those risks.
2. The employee at risk must be given training in any control measures which have been adopted. These might include: -

* Assessing load weights.
* Recognition of specific risk factors, e.g. wind effects on large loads.
* Good load lifting technique.
* Team lifting.
* Mechanical aids, e.g. levers or hoists.
* Any PPE identified and supplied.

# MANUAL LIFTING TECHNIQUE

1. Just because you have been lifting heavy objects all your working life does not necessarily mean that you have been doing it correctly. The key factors in safe lifting are:

##### Balance

1. Since balance depends essentially upon the position of the feet, they should be apart about hip breadth with one foot advanced, giving full balance sideways and forward without tension. By taking up this position, lifting is done by bending at the knees instead of the hips and using the thigh muscles and not those in the back.

##### Position of the back

1. Straight – not necessarily vertical. The spine must be kept rigid and straight, but not necessarily vertical. The spine can be kept straight if it is within 15 to 20 degrees from the vertical. This, coupled with a bent knee position, allows the centre line of gravity of the body to be over the weight, so reducing strain.

##### Position of the Arms and Body

1. The further arms are away from the side, the greater the strain on the shoulders, chest and back. The elbows must at all times be close to the body; arms should be straight when carrying a load. One hand should be advanced in relation to the other, whichever foot is placed forward, the same hand should be extended, the other hand is kept close to the body. This position ensures that the elbows are into the sides. This, and the correct foot position, ensures a safe and easy lift.

##### Load Position

1. The further the weight is away from the centre line of gravity of the lifter, the greater the strain. At all times get close to the weight and try to make it part of you.

##### The Hold

1. When grasping a weight, one often hears the phrase “get a good hold”. A good hold means a grasp with the roots of the fingers, not just the tips, plus contact of the weight with the palm of the hand.

##### Individuals’ Capacity

1. Never forget that size and build have no bearing upon the amount any one individual can lift. Everyone should know their own capabilities and should never attempt to exceed them. If in doubt get help, it is far better to be safe than sorry.

##### Centre of Gravity

1. It is essential that the weight of the object and the centre line of gravity of the lifter should be as close as possible to one another. This reduces strain, discomfort and the likelihood of loss of balance during the course of the lift.
2. Shape of the Load - Note the shape of the object. If possible, it should be turned so that its shortest measurement is nearest to the centre of gravity.

##### Testing the Weight

1. When in the initial position for the lift, the lifter should test the weight of the object to make sure it is within his capability and not too heavy for one man to lift. Many accidents happen when a man raises an object a few inches off the floor, realises it is too heavy for him and lets go.

##### Movement

1. The movement should be controlled and smooth. The weight should be kept close to the body.
2. Rhythm plays an important part in reducing tension and creating relaxation.
3. Before moving any loads, the job should be sized up and possible hazards moved or rectified.
4. An inspection of the load itself must be made to ensure that it can be moved without danger to the lifter or others.
5. The following checklist can be usefully applied to all lifting jobs:
6. Safety boots should always be worn when lifting loads to avoid possible injury to the foot, should a load be dropped.
7. When lifting anything that may have jagged edges, wear protective gloves.
8. If corrosive chemical containers are to be moved, special protective clothing must be worn.
9. If the load is heavy, or too large for one man to handle, help should be obtained from a workmate of similar physique.
10. Jerking a load will add a little extra force, but it will also cause severe strain to the arm, back and shoulder.
11. Even if a load is light in weight, it is dangerous to carry if it is large enough to obscure vision.
12. Loads should not be pushed onto stacks above chest level. If a stack is this high, stand on a sturdy platform.
13. If the load to be lifted exceeds half the weight of the person lifting it, it is more than likely that the individual will lose his balance.

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