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Manual Handling Guidance

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Manual Handling is described as any task in which a load is supported, lifted, pulled or pushed by hand or body force.

It is important for everyone to be aware of the dangers associated with manual handling of items. Poor position forced or awkward movements of body can result in for example, back injuries, or severe pains in the upper limb, neck or shoulders resulting in strain.

To minimise the risk of injury from manual handling, the following procedures should be followed

- a. Avoid manual handling where there is a real risk of injury.
- b. Use mechanical aids to move loads if available.
- c. Plan your route before lifting commences.
- d. Ensure routes are free of obstacles and avoid twisting movements.
- e. Ensure you can see where you are going, don't let the load block your vision.
- f. Whenever possible make loads smaller /lighter.
- g. If there is any doubt about lifting an item Edward Jennings should be consulted and alternative methods discussed.

GOOD MANUAL HANDLING TECHNIQUE

Important steps to adopt when carrying out manual Handling tasks

- a. **Stop and Think:** Plan the lift by checking the weight of the load and the route to be taken
- b. **Do I need help:** Are you capable of lifting the load safely on your own?
- c. **Stand close to the load:** Feet apart, knees slightly bent creating a stable base.
- d. **Lower your body to the load and take a firm grip:** bend the knees further and bring the load close to your body.
- e. **Look up: Stand up:** Using all the relevant muscles naturally. keep the load as close to the body as possible, avoid twisting.
- f. **Lifting above shoulder height:** When lifting above shoulder height, break the lift into two parts, resting the load on a suitable weight bearing surface to change your stance and grip. suitable equipment must be used e.g., ladders if required.
- g. **Placing a load down:** Bend the knees not the back.
- h. **Stairs:** When carrying loads up and down stairs it is essential that the load does not block your vision of the steps and that the load is light enough to carry with one hand to allow the other to use the handrail. If this is not possible due to size load and size, consider reducing into smaller amounts. Loads that cannot be broken down should be moved using approved lifting equipment. **Travel Distance:** When possible, use mechanical aids e.g., trolleys, sack carts.