

PLAYING IT **SAFE**

Be safe and healthy on the job at Rockingham Co Schools with these helpful tips provided by Surry Insurance Loss Prevention Services.

Back Injury Prevention Techniques

Helpful tips for eliminating back pain

Lifting objects may not be part of your regular tasks at the office, but when you do carry objects, it is important to exercise the proper technique. In fact, people that lift heavy items less often are more likely to hurt themselves because of lack of experience. Follow these simple guidelines and learn to lift properly.

Proper Lifting Techniques

- Follow recommended guidelines for safe lifting. Paper boxes and other office supplies can be deceptively heavy.
- Clear away any potential obstacles before beginning to carry an object.
- Get a good grip and good footing. Use your hands, not your fingers, to grip the load, and position your feet so that one foot is next to the load and one is behind it.
- Get under the object by bending your knees, not your back. This is the most important lifting technique to remember, as bending over at the waist to reach for the object puts strain on your back, shoulder and neck muscles and can cause serious injury.
- Carry the object close to your body.
- Never twist your body when you are lifting. Turn your entire body by using your feet.
- Do not lift above the shoulders or below waist level.

Size up the Load

Before lifting an object, check its weight. Decide if you can handle it alone or if you

need assistance. When in doubt, ask for help. Moving an object that is too heavy or bulky can cause severe injury. If a particular load is heavier than you can handle:

- Get someone to help.
- Break it down into smaller loads if possible.
- Use dollies or carts as aids. These tools were made for heavy lifting.

At Your Desk

Even though you're sitting, spending a lot of time at your desk can cause back pain.

- Keep everything you work with at your desk within your normal reach.
- Use proper ergonomics at your desk - sit with your feet on the floor and keep your arms at a 90-degree angle while typing.
- Take short breaks throughout the day to stretch and rebalance your body.

Get Fit!

People who are in poor physical condition are at greater risk for back problems. A conditioning program that includes aerobics, weight training and stretching exercises will help you prepare your body for the rigors of lifting. If lifting is a regular part of your job, you may also want to consider wearing a back belt for added support.



Sit up Straight

If you are in a position where you spend a lot of time sitting at your desk, back pain can be very bothersome. Think about your posture when you're sitting for long periods of time. Focus on maintaining an overall relaxed position without slouching.

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