



WINTER LIFTING HAZARDS

Today's Date: _____

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Cold weather brings a variety of unique challenges to the construction site. Being exposed to the elements can create slippery conditions, the need for restrictive cold weather apparel, and dangerous driving hazards. In addition, lower temperatures make for cold muscles, which results in sprain and strain injuries.

Warming Up and Stretching Before Work

Stiff muscles are often the cause of sprains and strains, and this can be especially true in cold weather. The work does not have to be "heavy" to cause an injury. Lack of flexibility is the most common cause of low back pain. Some experts believe as many as 80% of cases of low back pain can be alleviated by stretching. Stretching helps promote the health of joints, ligaments, and muscles, and helps you avoid injuries. Just a few minutes spent stretching arms, legs, back, and neck muscles can save you from hours spent with heating pads, hot baths, and expensive chiropractic adjustments.

Arm Stretches: Raise your arms above your head, fingers interlaced, palms facing up. Push up as far as you can. Hold for 10 seconds. Relax. Repeat 5 times.

Leg/Back Stretch: Bend from the waist and place palms flat on the floor. Lightly bend knees if necessary. Work to round the back and straighten legs at the same time. Hold for 20 seconds.

Head and Neck Roll: Relax your shoulders and let your head roll forward, chin to chest. Slowly rotate your head in a circle without straining your neck. Repeat five times. Relax. Then rotate in the opposite direction and repeat 5 times.

Use Proper Lifting Techniques

You've heard it before: Lift with your legs, not your back!

- Make sure the route is free of slip and trip hazards
- Squat to lift and lower - do not bend at the waist
- Get a solid grip on the object you're going to move
- Keep your back bowed when bending
- Keep the object close to you, holding it between your hips and shoulders
- Keep your lower back in - raise up with your head first
- Never jerk or twist
- Put the object down by keeping your lower back bowed in
- Keep your feet about shoulders width apart and staggered if possible
- Wear shoes with good traction
- When in doubt, get help

Check out You Tube video ["Sim's Crane - Stretch & Flex Program"](#) for a one-minute snapshot of their new regimen.

Attended By: