

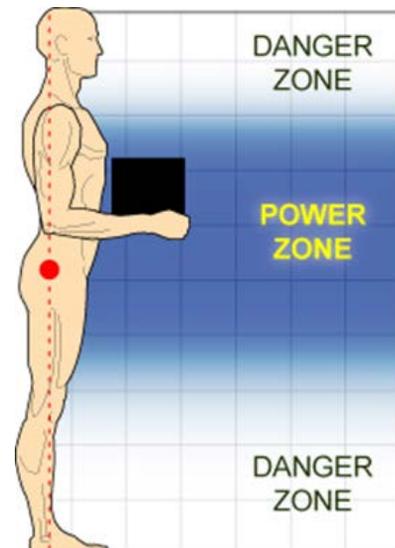
Handling Heavy Tools and Equipment

Lifting heavy items is one of the leading causes of injury in the workplace. When employees use smart lifting practices and work in their "power zone," they are less likely to suffer from back sprains, muscle pulls, wrist injuries, elbow injuries, spinal injuries, and other injuries caused by lifting heavy objects.

Some loads, such as heavy tools and machinery place great stress on muscles, discs, and vertebrae. Lifting loads heavier than what you can safely manage will increase the risk of injury.

Possible Solutions:

- Use mechanical means such as forklifts or duct lifts to lift heavy spools, transformers, switch gear, service sections, conduit, and machinery.
- Use pallet jacks and hand trucks to transport heavy items.
- Avoid rolling spools. Once they are in motion, it is difficult to stop them.
- Use suction devices to lift junction boxes and other materials with smooth, flat surfaces. These tools place a temporary handle that makes lifting easier.
- Use ramps or lift gates to load machinery into trucks rather than lifting it.
- Materials that must be manually lifted should be placed at "power zone" height, about mid-thigh to mid-chest. Special care should be taken to ensure proper lifting principles are used. Maintain neutral and straight spine alignment whenever possible. Usually, bending at the knees, not the waist, helps maintain proper spine alignment.
- Order supplies in smaller quantities and break down loads off-site. When possible, request that vendors and suppliers break down loads prior to delivery.
- Prefabricate items in a central area where mechanical lifts can be used. Only transport smaller, finished products to the site.
- Limit weight you lift to no more than what you can safely manage. When lifting loads heavier than what you can safely do alone, use two or more people to lift the load.
- Work with suppliers to make smaller, lighter containers.



source: U.S. Department of Labor (<http://www.dol.gov>)

Safety Talk Discussion

Be Accountable: Choose safety - work safe - and go home injury free!