

Snow Shoveling

The potential for musculoskeletal injury is high particularly among custodians working in areas where snowfalls are small or infrequent. Use mechanized snow removal equipment whenever possible.

Before you begin

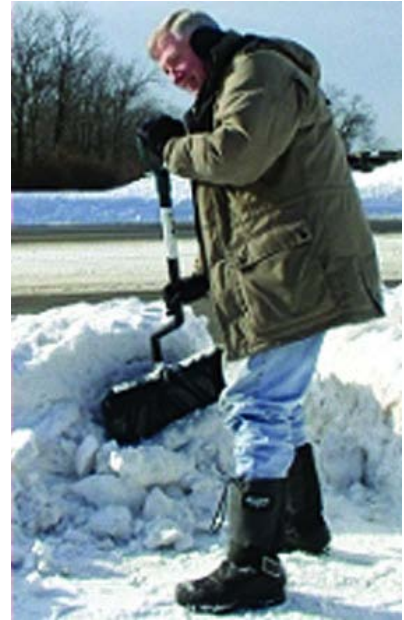
- Warm up your muscles for 10 minutes with light exercise or stretching
- Check with your doctor before shoveling if you have a medical condition or do not exercise regularly
- Dress in layers

Shovel early and often

Newly fallen snow is lighter than heavily packed or partially melted snow.

Pushing the snow

- Keep the shovel close to your body
- Space your hands on the shovel to increase leverage
- Shovel an inch or two off the top of the snow
- Use a shovel that feels comfortable for your height and strength



Lifting the snow

- Squat with your legs apart, knees bent and back straight
- Lift with your legs...do not bend at the waist
- Scoop small amounts of snow into the shovel and walk to where you want to dump it

Pace yourself

Take frequent breaks and replenish fluids to prevent dehydration, which affects muscle movement – shoveling snow is an aerobic activity.

It is better to push the snow rather than lifting it - but if you must lift the snow, lift it properly

DO NOT hold a shovelful of snow with your arms outstretched
– it puts too much weight on your spine

DO NOT remove deep snow all at once

DO NOT throw the snow over your shoulder or to the side
– this requires a twisting motion that stresses your back

DO NOT use a shovel that is too heavy or too long

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Safety Talk Discussion

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