

Handling tubs or containers of product

June 2017

What is the problem?

Workers having to manually move tubs or containers of product from one location to another, particularly where the tubs need to be slid over a wet floor.

What are the risks?

Manually moving heavy tubs and containers involves bending, twisting and high-force exertion. This can cause musculoskeletal injuries, particularly to the back, shoulders, arms and knees. Injuries can occur suddenly or gradually over time.

What is a solution to the problem?

The risk of injuries can be reduced by introducing a mechanised or mechanically assisted method of transporting tubs between work areas, such as a:

- conveyor
- tug (to move stacked tubs or trolleys)
- scissor trolley (to handle and transport individual tubs and containers).

Team handling should not be used, as tubs are not designed to be handled this way.

Trolleys

Trolleys should have:

- a height-adjustable spring or scissor base to ensure the load can be positioned at a suitable height for lifting or sliding
- heavier items on the bottom
- handles that project away from the body of the trolley to allow the worker pushing to use them without their legs or feet hitting the trolley during walking
- a height limit set for stacking, so the worker pushing can see over the load
- a clearly visible label showing the load rating in kilograms and number of items
- large-diameter castors suitable for the floor surface
- low-resistance bearings
- regular inspection and maintenance – damaged trolleys should be removed from service until repaired or replaced.

Floor surfaces

Where items are pulled or pushed, the floor surface needs to be level and smooth, without ridges and rough or damaged patches and level changes.

Floor types need to be non-slip and suitable for wet areas without increasing the force needed to push trolleys and other equipment.

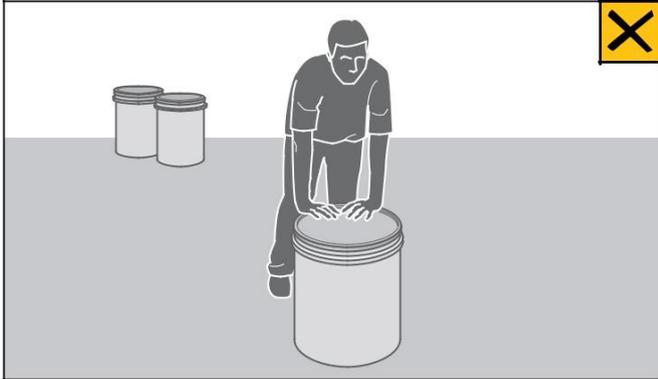
Regular housekeeping (eg appropriate cleaning for floor type, and elimination of spills of grease, residue, oils, crumbs and water) is essential to prevent slips, trips and falls.

Inspections will help identify sources of spills and leaks from the process and help maintain a clean and smooth floor surface to make it easier to move the trolleys.

Footwear suitable for wet areas and the process should be provided to workers in the area.

A Health and Safety Solution Handling tubs or containers of product

The problem



Workers shouldn't have to push or pull objects that are hard to move or stop.



Use a tug (shown), conveyer or scissor trolley to allow workers to work in appropriate postures without exerting excessive force.

Further information

WorkSafe Advisory Service

Toll-free: 1800 136 089

Email: info@worksafe.vic.gov.au

worksafe.vic.gov.au

Related WorkSafe publications

A guide to manual handling in the food industry

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