

SAFE WORK PRACTICE

TITLE	Musculoskeletal Injury Risk
GENERAL	Protecting workers from injuries associated with Musculoskeletal Injury Risk
APPLICATION	As per job requirement
PROTECTIVE MECHANISMS	Safe job procedure
SELECTION AND USE	As per safe job procedure
SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY	To facilitate and/or provide proper instruction to their workers on protection requirements
WORKER RESPONSIBILITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain proper posture and use back rests which are designed to support natural curves in your spine 2. Don't drive with your wallet in your back pocket. The wallet may put your spine out of alignment and exert pressure on your sciatic nerve, which can lead to back and leg pain. 3. Maintaining good sitting posture is important. Try to get out of your vehicle for a couple of minutes every hour or two and gently stretch backwards. Ideally, the back of your seat should be tilted at 110 degrees from your legs to reduce disc pressure and relax back muscles. 4. Avoid lifting immediately after driving. The first 2 or 3 minutes after you exit your vehicle is a high risk time for injury. Your muscles are tired; your ligaments are stretched and unable to support your spine properly; your spinal discs are at risk of injury. Give yourself a couple of minutes to stretch and rest before trying to lift anything heavy. A standing back bend, slow and easy, will help reduce the stress on your spine from sitting. 5. Avoid jumping down from your vehicle. The impact of jumping puts additional stress and shock on your spine. Over the years this can result in low back injury. Jumping down from vehicles may also cause knee and ankle injuries. Always face your vehicle when dismounting and maintain 3 point contact. Remember that 14% of back injuries to heavy equipment operators are caused by improper dismounting from the vehicle. 6. If possible, adjust your seat and steering wheel so that you can use the pedals and still keep your low back in contact with the seat back. 7. When driving for long periods, shift positions occasionally to give your back a change of position 8. Before entering or exiting the cab, slide the seat back. This will give you more room & prevent the need to twist. Try to keep your back straight & avoid twisting when getting in and out. Bend at your hips & knees rather than at your back. 9. Maintain equipment in sound working order. A good suspension system & correct tire pressure will help to reduce vibration. 10. Take extra care and reduce travel speed over rough terrain 11. If possible, tilt your seat a notch or 2 every 30 minutes. This alters the direction of vibration throughout your body and helps reduce its effects. 12. The following work practices must be followed to reduce health effects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wear gloves to keep your hands warm in cold weather - Take breaks when possible and stretch your fingers and hands - Equipment controls should have vibration-reducing material built into the grips

* The information presented in this publication is intended for general use and may not apply to every circumstance. It is not a definitive guide to government regulations and does not relieve persons using this publication from their responsibilities under applicable legislation.