

Ergonomics Checklist

Below is a checklist that can be completed every couple of weeks to help keep an eye out for ergonomic problems and prevent injuries.

Materials Handling

- What heavy materials or equipment are being handled on site –drywall, rebar, concrete forms, anything over 20 pounds?
- Do any workers have to lift more than 50 pounds at one time without help?
- Do workers have to lift more than 20 pounds often? If so, how can this be changed?
- Are there handles to help carry materials? If yes, are they easy to use and comfortable?
- Are workers told to get help to lift heavy materials?
- Are there carts, dollies, or other aids readily available for moving materials? If so, are they being used?
- Are materials delivered as close as possible to where they will be used? If no, how can this be changed?
- On workers avoid having lift overhead?
- Are materials stored at floor level? Do workers have to bend down to lift materials?
- Can materials be stored at waist height?
- On which tasks do workers have to stretch to pick up or lift materials?
- Can the materials be kept closer?

Tools

- Are tools sharp and in good condition?
- Which tools are very heavy or not well balanced?
- Which tools vibrate too much?
- Which tools must be used while in a difficult position?
- Which tools have poor handle design?
 - Grips too big or too small?
 - Handles that are too short and dig into hands?
 - Handles with ridges that dig into hands?
 - Slippery handles?

- Which tools require bending of wrists to use?
- Do gloves ever make it hard to grip tools?
- Are there other tools with a better design?

Repetitive Work

- Which tasks or jobs use the same motion dozens of times an hour for more than 1 hour per day?
- What are the motions?
- Can the number of repetitions be reduced by job rotation or rest breaks?

Awkward Postures

- Which tasks involve work above the shoulders for more than 1 hour a day?
- Can scaffolds, platforms, or other equipment cut down on the need to work overhead?
- Which tasks or jobs involve work at floor level or on knees for more than 1 hour a day?
- Are knee pads or cushions available and are they used?
- Can equipment be used to reduce kneeling?
- Which jobs require workers to stay in one position for a long time?
- Can rotation or rest breaks be used to reduce time in awkward postures?
- Which jobs require a lot of twisting or turning?
- Which jobs require a lot of bending?
- How can the need to twist or bend be reduced?

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Standing

- What jobs require workers to stand all day, especially on concrete floors?
- Can anti-fatigue matting be used?
- Is it possible to use adjustable stools to allow workers to rest now and then?

Surface for Walking and Working

- Are the working and walking surfaces clean and dry?
- Are the surfaces unobstructed?
- Are the surfaces even?

Seating

- What jobs require sitting all day?
- Are the seats well-designed, easy to adjust, and comfortable?
- In heavy equipment, do workers have to lean forward to see/do their work?
- Does the seating in any heavy equipment vibrate a lot?

Production Pressures

- Do any workers work piece rate?
- Have supervisors or workers been under production pressure that could lead to shortcuts and injuries?
- How can this problem be reduced? More breaks? More safety meetings? A special safety rep on site?

Training

- What training have workers had on ergonomics –preventing musculoskeletal disorders?
- What training have supervisors had on ergonomics?
- Do workers feel free to report symptoms?
- Have workers been reporting muscle pain, tingling, numbness, loss of strength or loss of joint movement?
- What jobs have the most problems and what may be the main cause?
- Do workers often appear exhausted at the end of the day?

After answering these questions, look for ways to work with employees to reduce the number of hazards in order to make the job easier and reduce the number of injuries.

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