

APPENDIX 10

ERGONOMICS

Ergonomics

Is the science and practice of designing jobs or workplaces to match capabilities and limitations of the human body. Knowledge of ergonomics helps both the employer and employee identify jobs and tasks such as lifting heavy loads, working in awkward postures, or performing certain repetitive motions over time that may lead to injury and work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs). It has been estimated that 40% of the world's work-related health costs are attributed to WMSDs both in developing and developed countries. ¹ It has also been shown that ergonomic interventions have reduced the number of WMSDs by over 50%. ² An ergonomics program should utilize intervention techniques that focus on a method of achieving prevention. Training should be part of any program aimed at improving work and the work environment.

The following resources will assist with information, planning and training:

Ergonomics: Office Ergonomics –Practical Solutions for a Safer Workplace. Prepared by the WISHA Services Division, Washington State Department of Labor and Industries February 2002. This document is available by the following URL:

<http://lni.wa.gov/IPUB/417-133-000.pdf>

Lifting FAQ: See this appendix or the following URL:

<http://lni.wa.gov/Safety/Topics/Ergonomics/ServicesResources/WhatsNew/PDFs/LiftingFAQrevised.pdf>

Lessons for lifting and moving materials: This document is available through the following **URL: <http://lni.wa.gov/FormPub/Detail.asp?DocID=1760>**.

Bibliography:

1. International Occupational Safety and Health Information Center, Geneva, International Labor Office, Introductory Report of the International Labor Office, 1999.
2. E. Roskam, Preventing Workplace Injuries and Illnesses Through Ergonomics Geneva, International Labor Organization, World at Work, 1997; 21:5-8.