Store it Smartly and Lift it Safely

Employees injure their backs more frequently than any other body part. Most back problems occur over a period of time. Follow this advice to help prevent these injuries.

✓ Stack heavier items on the middle shelves.
✓ Store lighter goods on the top shelves.
✓ Stack items used most frequently at a convenient waist level.
✓ Get help lifting heavy items.
✓ Keep storage areas clear and free from obstructions.
✓ Use a stool or ladder to access items on shelves. Do not stand on chairs or boxes that might tip over.
✓ Lighten the load to be lifted. Buy bulk goods in smaller, easier to handle containers.
✓ Limit lifting by hand. Use available equipment such as carts, hand trucks and pallet jacks to help with lifting and transporting products.
✓ Use proper lifting techniques. Learn to lift properly and stay fit to help reduce the risk of injury from lifting.

Before lifting, size up the load:

• Wear gloves to protect hands from nails and splinters.
• Use a hand cart if possible.
• Get help with heavy loads.
• See that the load is balanced and stable.
• Do not lift a load that is too heavy, slippery, hot, or unevenly balanced.
• Make sure you have a clear traveling path.
• Stretch or “warm up” your back before lifting.

Lifting:

• Bring the load as close to you as possible before lifting. Avoid reaching across something to lift a load. This moves the load away from the body and increases your chance of injury.
• Lift with your legs, not your back.
• Keep your head up, your back straight, and bend at your hips.
• Shift your feet to turn; don’t twist your body. Keep your hips in line with your shoulders.
• Keep the load directly in front of your body. Avoid reaching to the side. Avoid twisting.
• Try to avoid lifting heavy loads above your waist.
• Pushing is better for your back than pulling. Push evenly with both hands.

Lowering:

• Body position is just as important when setting the load down as when picking the load up. Use your leg muscles to comfortably lower the load by bending your knees.
• Make certain that your fingers and toes are clear before setting the load down.