



# ERGONOMICS

January

2009

## Topic of the month: Accepting Ergonomic Change

**CHANGE-** as an individual it can have many meanings. In your personal life it could be a new friendship, marriage, a new addition to the family, or any number of occurrences that alter our day to day life. In our workplace it could be a new bid, route adjustment, and automation or like our personal life, any number of occurrences that alter our routine.

As employees we may be creatures of habit. We perform our daily tasks the same way everyday, making our job a daily routine. Good habits make our days go along carefree and easy, while change might create temporary turmoil.

Our "service talk" on ergonomic risk reduction this month than is about change. Accepting the change that ergonomics brings to our workplace means changing our routines and breaking old habits, but all for the good. Ergonomics is the idea of working smarter not harder, and of making things more user friendly.

With that in mind, resolve to make change using our 10 Principles of Ergonomics.

1. **Maintain a Neutral Posture** - maintain the natural S-curve of your spine at work and play.
2. **Keep Everything in Easy Reach** - keep those items you use regularly within arms length reach and what you use infrequently further away.
3. **Work at Proper Heights** - keep the majority of lifts between knee and shoulder height when possible.
4. **Reduce Excessive Force** - don't overload equipment to reduce lift, lower, push and carry forces.
5. **Reduce Excessive Motions** - movement is good for the body but do we need to move as frequently? Efficient motions, when performing tasks, reduce fatigue as well.
6. **Minimize Fatigue and Static Load** - writer's cramp is an example we can all relate to. Do you need to use as much grip force and can you alternate tasks?
7. **Minimize Pressure Points** - use or provide padding to soften pressure on the body.
8. **Provide Clearance** - maintain adequate room to perform tasks while avoiding striking other obstacles.
9. **Be Aware of the Environment** - too much lighting can fatigue as quickly as inadequate lighting. Also, dress appropriately for the weather.
10. **Move, Exercise and Stretch** - when you feel discomfort, stretch or massage the area to increase blood flow and reduce discomfort.

### Ergonomic Principles

- Work in neutral postures
- Reduce unnecessary force
- Keep things in easy reach
- Work at proper heights
- Reduce repetitive motions
- Minimize Strain and Fatigue
- Minimize pressure points
- Provide clearance
- Move, exercise, and stretch
- Know your environment

### **A-T-T-I-T-U-D-E**

$$1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 = 100\%$$

**The change you can make!**

Ergonomic risk reduction starts with YOU! Make an attitude change that allows you to share your "Good Ideas" for risk reduction with everyone in our district not just in the workplace but also at home and in our recreational activities.

**Work Smarter - Not Harder!**



Keep the S-curve, whether sitting or standing

- The back with its natural "s-curve" intact.
- The neck in its proper alignment.
- The elbows held naturally at the sides of the body and the shoulders relaxed.
- The wrists in line with the forearm.