

# Safety and health alert

# 12/05 Manual handling of beer kegs

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## Incident

WorkSafe Inspectors have identified a number of workplaces where the manual handling of beer kegs is putting employees at a high risk of injury, especially sprain/strain type injuries to backs. The high-risk activities include lifting, carrying and lowering of full beer kegs by either one or two people.

The average weight of a full beer keg is 62kg. This is too heavy for people to safely lift, lower or carry on their own.

Using two people to handle the kegs is a high-risk activity because of the awkward postures involved and the risk of one person having to take most of the weight if the second person slips or loses their grip.

Many coolrooms have low ceilings and limited space, which may require employees to adopt poor postures while handling beer kegs. This further increases the risk of injury.

WorkSafe considers the lifting, carrying or lowering of full beer kegs by one or two people to be a high-risk manual handling activity. Where Inspectors identify this occurring in the workplace, they will take enforcement action.

## Factors to consider

- Manual handling of full beer kegs is a high risk activity.
- One or two persons cannot safely lift, carry and lower full beer kegs manually.

## Recommendations

1. Employers should, as far as practicable, manage stock levels so that beer kegs do not need to be stacked on top of each other.
2. When beer kegs do need to be moved or lifted, ensure that mechanical aids are used. There are some excellent trolleys available that feature lifting mechanisms specifically designed to raise/lower beer kegs.

## Further information

Further information on manual handling can be found in The Manual Handling Code of Practice.

Contact WorkSafe on 1300 307 877 to obtain this document, or access our website at [www.safetyline.wa.gov.au](http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au)

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