

Safety and health alert

04/04 Butcher injured while lifting tubs of meat trimmings

Incident

A butcher working in a supermarket received a sprain/strain injury to his lower back as a result of pulling and lifting tubs of meat trimmings estimated to weigh 30kg from beneath the meat preparation table onto trolleys.

Factors

- The weight of the tubs being handled (30 to 40kg).
- The location of tubs below mid-thigh height, forcing the employee to bend.
- One-handed pulling of the tubs from under the table.
- Layout of the work area that resulted in employees stooping and twisting to lift tubs.

Recommendations

- Introduce the use of lifting devices, mechanical equipment or trolleys that can transport tubs at same level as the preparation tables, eliminating the need for manual handling.
- Reducing the weight by limiting the amount of trimmings placed in each tub.
- Ensure work areas are designed to suit the tasks to be performed and that workspace is not restricted in any way.
- Training employees in manual handling hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control techniques.

Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the WorkSafe internet site www.worksafe.wa.gov.au, or by contacting customer service on 1300 307 877 or email: safety@docep.wa.gov.au.

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