**ACTIVITY: Manual Handling - Hazardous Manual Tasks**

**SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT (SWMS) – Part 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name:</th>
<th>Address:</th>
<th>ABN:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company Contact:</td>
<td>Position:</td>
<td>Phone No.:</td>
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**Project Details**

<table>
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<th>Project:</th>
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<table>
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<th>Job Address:</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Job Description:</th>
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Relevant workers must be consulted in the development, approval and communication of this SWMS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: (Include names of workers who were consulted in relation to the development of this SWMS)</th>
<th>Signature:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Job TITLE:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Name of Principal Contractor:</th>
<th>Principal Contractor Company Name:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Date SWMS provided to Principal Contractor:</th>
<th>Principal Contractor Signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Name of person responsible for ensuring compliance with SWMS:</th>
<th>Signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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**SWMS Scope**

Manual tasks include all physical activity; yet only present a risk when they are considered hazardous. Hazardous manual tasks can lead to injuries that are called “Musculoskeletal Injuries” or MSD’s.

This SWMS covers general aspects associated with hazardous manual handling tasks. The SWMS covers the requirement to identify, assess and control hazardous manual tasks in relation to general lifting activities across numerous industries including construction, manufacturing, hospitality etc. This does not provide specific risk controls in relation to people handling in health care settings.

Main Injury types: Musculoskeletal (MSD) injuries
- Muscles, ligaments, nerves, and tendons in the wrists, arms, shoulders, neck or legs, muscles, ligaments or discs in the back.
- These injuries can be sudden or occur gradually over time.
- Muscular Stress – sprains, strains, temporary soft tissue injuries
- Indirect Injuries – cuts / lacerations.

**Hazards - What can cause harm?**

- Hazardous Manual Tasks - awkward, twisting, bending positions
- Hazardous Manual Tasks - lifting, carrying, or putting down objects
- Hazardous Manual Tasks - prolonged sitting
- Hazardous Manual Tasks - pushing, pulling, throwing, pressing objects
- Hazardous Manual Tasks - repetitive movements
- Contact with cold / cold objects
- Contact with sharp objects

**Risks - What can happen?**

- Muscular stress
- Musculoskeletal Disorder
- Hit by falling, tarring or projected objects
- Hitting objects
- Stepping, kneeling or sitting on objects
- Being crushed / run over or struck by animal
- Hit by a person
- Friction injury – rubbing, chafing, rope burn
- Falling over on same level causing bruises, sprains, strains, fractures

**Control Measures to Reduce Risk**

Consultation in relation to hazards and risks. Ensure:
- Consult with the person you are carrying out the work for on the potential hazards and risks associated with the task
- If represented by an elected health and safety representative, the representative should be included in any consultation
- Any other persons on site who are affected by the same matter are consulted and co-operative arrangements are made
- Document consultation and action items.

Develop and implement a system to identify, assess and control hazardous manual tasks. Consider use of Risk Assessment worksheets (samples provided at end of SWMS) as provided by SafeWork Australia (2011) Hazardous Manual tasks; Code of Practice

Example:
Identify hazardous manual tasks. Include tasks that involve:
- Repetitive or sustained force
- Awkward postures

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Ensure all PPE meets relevant Australian Standards. Inspect, and replace PPE as needed.

AS 1319-1994 Safety signs for the occupational environment reproduced with permission from SAI Global under licence 1210-c062. Standards may be purchased at [http://www.saiglobal.com](http://www.saiglobal.com)

Back protectors, knee protectors, elbow or hand protectors may be required for tasks involving high / sudden impact, and/or sustained / repetitive / load carrying activities.

- **Foot Protection**
- **High Visibility**
- **Hand Protection**
- **Sun Protection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foot Protection</th>
<th>High Visibility</th>
<th>Hand Protection</th>
<th>Sun Protection</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Foot Protection Icon" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="High Visibility Icon" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Hand Protection Icon" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sun Protection Icon" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Broad brimmed hat, UV rated clothing, SPF 30+ sunscreen, tinted safety glasses with adequate UV protection
- Contact with solid objects
- Plant / vehicle operating – moving parts, flying objects, projected objects, falling objects
- Handling / lifting people
- Animal handling
- Electricity - Energised electrical equipment
- Static electricity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slips, trips</td>
<td>Drop or overturn of item causing bruises, sprains, strains, fractures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laceration / cut</td>
<td>Run over/struck by vehicle causing serious injury or death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye / skin injury</td>
<td>Electricity - Energised electrical equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrocution</td>
<td>Static electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric shock.</td>
<td>Vibration (whole body such as driving, or arm/hand when using power tools)</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Unstable or unbalanced loads which are difficult to grasp or hold.</td>
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Assess where the risks may arise in the task. Consider:
- Postures
- Environmental conditions
- Previous injuries or incident reports
- Discomfort surveys
- Forces required to be exerted
- Speed of movement
- Vibration
- Duration and frequency
- Animal handling
- People handling.

Implement risk controls where as appropriate for the source of the risk. Choose from the following options:
- Alter workplace and layout
- Alter environmental conditions
- Alter system of work or how work is done
- Modify items used in the task.

Assess specific lifting task. Determine:
- Suitable access for plant/equipment needed
- Known hazards at location (e.g.: asbestos, lead, chemicals, unsafe electrical installations, uneven ground, high traffic or fall risks)
- Types of objects to be handled/removed
- Location of objects (e.g.: third story, no elevator etc)
- Presence of:
  - Stairs, Slopes/ gradients
  - Pets or children
  - Other potential hazards
- Loading/transport
  - Ensure vehicle is suitable for loads – trucks, moving vans etc.
  - Where cranes are used, ensure:
    - Dedicated SWMS developed
    - Suitable SWL
    - Licensed operators
    - Sufficient room
    - Traffic Management plan in place
- Clear of overhead electric lines, overhanging trees or other obstructions
- Lifting equipment (slings, chains, hooks) are suitable SWL, good condition and suitable for type of load
  - Vehicles fitted with hydraulic tailgate ramps have suitable SWL, attach securely to vehicle.

Check for hazards associated with controls (traffic management, overhead electric lines etc).
Risk controls continued:
- Use mechanical aids (such as trolleys, cranes, vacuum lifters, forklifts, pallet jacks etc)
- Provide safe work instructions and training.

Note: Instruction and training alone does not adequately reduce risk in most cases. Example: To lift a pallet load, a pallet lifter can be used. Do not rely on training workers on safe lifting methods to reduce risk. Instruction and training should be used in conjunction with other risk controls and can only be used as a stand-alone risk control when no other means to reduce risk are available.

Provide adequate resources and controls. Examples:
- Sufficient workers and time for task
- Adequate rest breaks and recovery time
- Job rotation to ensure task variety
- Suitable transport vehicles with hydraulic tailgate (avoid storing heavy items in boot of sedans)
- Ergonomically designed trolleys/dollies, motorized “tugs” for heavier trolley loads, pallet jacks etc.
- Lifting aids and equipment (cranes, vacuum lifters)
- Specialised equipment such as spring/scissor trolleys, adjustable conveyors, anti-kickback devices on power tools, height adjustable pallet lifters with a turntable, etc.
- Smaller-sized bags/containers of materials
- Team-lifts.

Seek advice from competent persons (Ergonomist) on task-specific risk controls where required.

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**Job Step: Preparation**

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<tr>
<th>Main Hazards:</th>
<th>Main Risks:</th>
<th>Assess specific lifting task. Determine:</th>
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<td>- Muscular stress</td>
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