



# COMPLIANCE TIP

## Ergonomic Safety

Work related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) result when there is a mismatch between the physical capacity of workers and the physical demands of their jobs. Each year 1.8 million workers in the United States report work-related MSDs such as carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, and back injuries. The solution of these injuries lies with ergonomics, the science of fitting the job to the worker.

### ACTIONS

#### Identify Risk Factors

- Review of existing records of work-related illnesses and injuries. The review may include the OSHA log and workers' compensation records.
- Review employee reports. For example, an employee may reports of MSD symptoms or report concerns about MSD risk factors.
- Survey jobs in the workplace to identify risk factors. Job surveys may include walkthroughs, employee and supervisor interviews/questionnaires, work-related risk factor checklists, or team problem solving approaches. They should be performed whenever the potential for an MSD is suspected and when designing or buying new equipment, tools, processes or jobs.
- Examine existing policies, practices and programs to ensure that they encourage prompt reporting of MSD symptoms or potential MSD risk factors without reprisals.

#### Reduce Risk Factors

- Develop a written program to address MSD's in the workplace.
- Provide employees with an opportunity to participate in the program. Ensure that workers can communicate problems, concerns, and ideas for improvement to management. This can be accomplished at on-the-job safety meeting and training.
- Perform Job Analysis when the Job Survey's reveal risk factors are present or a work related MSD is suspected. Ensure that exposure limits have been identified and met.
- Periodically inspect the workplace for MSD hazards. Ensure worker's are using and operating tools and equipment in the prescribed manner and work is being performed according to policies and procedures.

#### Treatment of MSD's

- Once notified of recurrent or persistent MSD symptoms, facilitate a prompt evaluation of the symptomatic employee by an appropriate health care provider (HCP) consistent with state laws.
- Select or recommend HCP's with knowledge, experience and training in workplace exposures and the evaluation and treatment of MSD's. Your insurance provider may be able to provide assistance in recommending qualified HCP's.



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- Ensure the HCP has the necessary information to perform a thorough evaluation and that appropriate and legally acceptable information is communicated to management.
- Redesign and modify jobs, and/or accommodate employees with work restrictions as determined by a HCP.

#### Training

- Managers, supervisors and workers must be trained on MSD risk factors and how the risk factors are controlled.
- Training must also ensure the successful execution of the MSD Program.
- Document and record the training.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitor your program by inspecting the work area to ensure all controls are in place.
- Periodically evaluate all elements of your workplace MSD program.

*Materials to assist you in addressing these requirements can be found in the eSafetyLine Software. The application provides compliance guides, training guides, checklists, model documents and training materials. The software also provides a data base and report generator to assist you in meeting the recordkeeping and reporting requirements of the standard.*