**Material Handling - How Do You Stack Up?**

Stacking and storing “stuff” happens in most workplaces, and probably most often in warehouse, manufacturing, and industrial settings, where materials are constantly being moved, stacked, and stored. How stable the “stuff” is depends on how well it is stacked in the first place. Remember, moving and stacking material can be done manually or mechanically using forklifts and other lift aids.

**The Basics**

To prevent stacked materials from falling, collapsing, rolling or sliding, you must plan the stack by looking at the object’s weight, size and shape, and how often it will be needed. Here are a few tips:

* Keep articles of the same size and weight together.
* Keep heavy and/or unstable items nearer to the floor.
* Keep items that don’t need to be used or moved a lot out of the way of items you need to get to on a regular or frequent basis.

**Bags**

To increase stability, secure bags and bundles by stacking them in an interlocking pattern or in alternating directions. Prevent bagged items from spilling or shifting by keeping them closed.

Improperly stacked materials can result in serious injuries, so take a minute to plan the stack and how materials will be safely moved, stacked, and stored.

Safety Now 11/17/17