Table of Contents for Safety

Proper Lifting:

The entire point of proper lifting is to avoid injuries. While there are different specifics for ergonomic lifting in various situations, the one overarching factor is to never lift using your back or hips as the primary driving force of the vertical movement.

Real time judgment tip: If you EVER feel like a squat lift isn't generating enough power to lift, find a partner to help. If you cannot get a solid grip, use a tool. If you cannot lift with your legs, then try with yours and a coworker, or a tool.

General guidelines for lifting:

1. Preparation - secure the load, route, and self. Stretch/warm up.
2. Lift - legs are for lifting, everything else is for something else.
3. Carry - stability first, movement second.
4. Set - lifting in reverse. Legs are still for lifting, everything else is for something else.

Highly detailed steps for safe lifting:

1. Inspect the object you're planning on moving, the desired location of leaving the object after moving, the path through which the object shall move, and any intersecting paths that others might utilize while the object is in motion.
2. Secure the object to whatever vehicle has been judged as effective–pallet jack, dolly, yourself, etc.
3. Verify personal posture. Maintain as close-to-core center of gravity as possible. Keep both feet firmly planted and within standard deviations of shoulder-length apart.
    a. For unassisted lifting, squat with a squared shoulder position and aligned back and hip position. Check your grip and recheck your center of gravity now that load is attached to you.
    b. For tool assisted lifting, utilize appropriate tool usage guidelines.
        I. When using a dolly, ensure that the center of gravity of the load is as close to the guide rails as possible, while you maintain a squared standing posture.
        II. When using a pallet jack, your posture should be close to a squared standing rest.
4. Lift the load.
    a. For unassisted lifting, after ensuring appropriately stable back and hip alignment against center of gravity, stand by extending your knees and allowing ONLY your ankles and hip rotations to RETURN to a resting position. If you cannot simply stand by extending your knees **without non-leg related joints moving**, then you do NOT have a properly secured load or posture.
    b. For tool assisted lifting, utilize appropriate tool usage guidelines.
        i. When using a dolly, ensure that the wheels remain stably underneath the load while the dolly handle remains close to your resting center of gravity.
        ii. When using a pallet jack, ensure appropriate environmental space for jacking the handle if on a manual jack, as well as ensure that the pallet has no impeding surroundings for the lift.
5. Transport the load.
    a. For unassisted lifting, maintain your vertical stance and walk with a standard gait. If you cannot take casual steps while holding a load, then the load is heavier than is safe for you to transport with unassisted lifting. Find a coworker or use a tool.
    b. For tool assisted lifting, follow appropriate tool guidelines.
        i. When moving with a dolly, keep the handle close to your center of gravity while walking normally, while the wheels remain firmly in contact with the ground.
        ii. When moving with a pallet jack, ensure appropriate environmental space for moving the jack handle, path width including load swing, and never allowing any person, yourself included, to put any body part or worn clothing article near or near under a pallet.
6. Set the load down. Just as when lifting the load, ensure appropriate postures and safety considerations.

a. For unassisted lifting, maintain your squared posture, ensure your feet are within appropriate standard deviations of shoulder width apart, and squat with the load at a controlled rate. Release your grip only after ensuring this landing location is clear.
b. For assisted lifting, follow appropriate tool guidelines.
    I. When moving with a dolly, return the dolly to its vertical resting position, keeping the center of gravity and wheels as vertically aligned as possible.
    II. When moving with a pallet jack, ensure that the landing position includes enough space to remove the pallet jack after dropping. During pallet jack release, do NOT fully release the hydraulics all at once. A slow pallet release doubles for safety, both allowing time for any incidentals to move if other safety policies weren't properly observed, as well as reducing risk of aggravating the pallet load. An aggravated pallet load runs the risk of breaking and falling onto the surroundings, yourself included.

Knives:

Sharps are present in the warehouse to make our jobs easier, but they come with risks. These risks are further exacerbated if sharps are not properly maintained. The takeaway for utilizing these tools is always maintaining as high a level of intentional control as possible. Responsible sharps handling falls into the following three categories: active usage, safe storage, and regular maintenance. Neglecting even one of these significantly increases risk in all categories.

Real time judgment tip: if a sharp isn't operating as expected, do not proceed with using it as is. If an inappropriate cutting technique is being used, it's very possible to lose control and injure yourself or others, especially unintentionally. If a poorly maintained sharp is being used, control can be compromised even with appropriate technique.

General guidelines for sharps:

1. If a sharp's intended shape does not match its real shape, do not use it.
2. If a sharps' edge is not clean, do not use it.
3. Sharps are only to be used to manipulate packaging.

Detailed categories for sharps handling:

Active Usage:

1. Retrieve the intended tool from safe storage.
    a. There should be a labeled or otherwise clearly designated toolbox. Consistency is key for anything that needs to be maintained.
2. Inspect the packaging to be opened or disassembled.

   a. Often, packaging is filled to its limit to save on shipping costs per shipping label, so find a vantage point that will not damage the product and an area with enough space to avoid accidentally contacting another person.
3. Unsheathed the edge of the tool.
   a. Different shapes have different methods of securing their blades for safe storage. Sometimes the sheath is a separate entity from the handle, other times it may be a retractable blade, with or without a safety lock or spring mechanism.
4. Inspect the blade for imperfections and remove imperfections per respective tool handling guidelines.
   a. For straight edge razors, any blemish to the blade line, be it a piece of tape or an actual chip or deformation, will reduce the slicing efficacy and drastically increase the chance of lost control if used as is.
   b. For serrated edge saws or knives, any debris, missing tooth, or misaligned tooth will reduce the sawing efficiency and drastically increase the chance of lost control if used as is.
   c. For heavy cleaving knives or axes, chipping, warping, and dulling all will reduce cleaving efficacy and drastically increase the chance of lost control and injury if used as is.
5. Open or disassemble the packaging using appropriate cutting techniques and safety protocols.
   a. For straight edge razors, the only appropriate cutting technique is a straight slice. A razor slice should be made at a glancing to 30-degree angle incident to the *thing being cut*.
      i. Cleaving will chip and deform edges
      ii. Sawing will deform and blunt edges.
   b. For serrated edge saws or knives, the only appropriate cutting technique is a regularly paced saw. The serration should be parallel to the surface being sawed.
      The pressure across the motion should also be kept parallel to the cut.
      i. Slicing will blunt and deform teeth and clog the teeth with debris.
      ii. ii. Cleaving will break teeth and deform bands.
      iii. Irregularly pressured and timed sawing will blunt and deform teeth unevenly.
   c. For heavy cleaving knives or axes, the appropriate cutting technique is cleaving. The blade should be making normal contact to the surface, and the direction of force should be a straight line going from spine to blade to surface. The only angle of incidence for a cleave should be 90 degrees. This line can be produced either through controlled swinging while gripping the handle or hitting the spine of the cleaver with another tool.
      i. Sawing risks jamming the tool, causing removal safety issues.
      ii. Properly controlled slicing is more difficult with the larger sizes of a cleaving tool.
6. Inspect the blade for imperfections and remove imperfections per respective tool handling guidelines.
   a. Ibid inspection guidelines of step 4, but after using the tool.
7. Sheath the edge of the tool.
   a. Highly preferably the original sheathing mechanic used in step 3.
8. Return tool to safe storage location.

a. Consistency is key for anything that needs to be maintained.

Safe Storage:

1. Keep the designated sharps container in a designated location for both consistency and safety. A locking lid or secured bay is advised to avoid accidental exposure to drop sharps.
2. Keep stored sharp sharply, appropriately sheathed or otherwise safely stored. Even in a secured location, an unsheathed blade can cause injury while reaching into a container.
3. Keep sharps refills and disposal in designated locations and clearly accessible.

Regular Maintenance:

On top of spot maintenance within active usage, all work sharps should be regularly maintained. This maintenance should only be performed by someone that has been appropriately trained and can be trusted to deal with blades that have had their safety features removed.

1. Identify the blade type.
2. Identify what imperfections are present.
3. Select materials and tools based on blade type and imperfections.
4. Designate work area, including keeping unauthorized individuals from entering the space when blades are exposed.
5. Disassemble tool to the necessary point to safely maintain the blade.
6. Perform blade maintenance.
7. Reassemble the tool.
8. Return the tool to its designated area.
9. Clean the workspace.

Blade maintenance training may be provided for those who express interest and have already displayed agreeable levels of integrity in other job aspects, at the discretion of the respective managerial staff.

Awareness:

In a warehouse, awareness isn't just a buzzword for training checklists. Awareness is one of the key mandates for a productive and safe environment, right up there with integrity and human rights. While it may sound like an extreme jump in priority meta discussion, it assuredly is necessary. Everyone in the warehouse is there for a paycheck among their other personal priorities. Still, everyone doesn't want to end a day with one less toe than with what they started the day. Most people aren't going to put their foot in the path of a moving pallet. However, two people who are not paying attention can certainly be the unintentional initiator and victim of an accident.

This section cannot give you a truly comprehensive do or do not list, but it asks that you acknowledge and prioritize your fellow co-workers as the humans that they are.

Key considerations:

- Boxes can contain 1 sheet of tissue paper or 80 pounds of ceramics and have the same outward appearance. Always assume and prepare for the worst, while being happy that it isn't most of the time.
- Someone moving a load has a harder time stopping their movement than someone walking by. Even if you're just passing through, either do not impede a moving load, or finish your route quickly to get out of the way.
- Physics does not matter what your pay grade or job description is.
- Put things back where you got them from. There are often designated areas for shared tools. Even if you don't know where those are in full, putting something back where you picked it up has a higher chance of being correct than not.
- Do NOT leave sharps or carts unattended, period, but *ESPECIALLY* do not leave on the sales floor.