

Hazard Review

- **Inappropriate lifting**
- **Awkward body postures**
- **Exposure to sharp edges and pinch points**

Related Safe Work Practices

- **Lifting and Body Mechanics**

Prepared by:	C. Reinhart and Recreation SWP Working Group
Program Managers:	R. DeLeon, Northern Supt; A. Jones-Taylor, Southern Supt
Approved by:	J. Bramlett, EHS Program Manager E. Goldstein, General Manager
Issued:	5/18/01

BEFORE

1. Educate staff on the proper body mechanics and familiarize staff on the types of portable tables that are at the sites and the potential handling hazards of each (pinch points, sharp edges, weight, etc.).
2. Know the type and number of tables to be set up for a particular job so that staff can plan for assistance to be available as needed. This is particularly important when handling the heavier, plywood/wood portable tables.
3. Consider good ergonomics and economy of motion in purchasing or acquiring new tables and table systems at facilities. Minimizing handling and reducing weights that must be lifted can help reduce the risk of potential injuries.
 - Plastic composite or aluminum based tables which are durable but much lighter than conventional wood models are preferred to minimize the human forces required for handling and setup. Lighter tables also reduce the need to have a second staff person available to assist with lifting.
 - Consider the need for wheeled storage racks to facilitate storage and transport to setup locations.
 - Consider shorter table lengths, rather than longer lengths, to reduce weight and awkwardness of setup.
4. Inspect each table and its associated equipment before setup.
 - Inspect table legs for firm attachment to the table surface. Grasp legs and test stability.
 - Check locking mechanisms to assure they work properly and are in good shape.
 - If a table cart is used, assure that the wheels are attached and work properly. A poorly rolling cart can hinder instead of help your safety.

5. Take any table found to be damaged or defective out of service and label clearly. Report the item to your supervisor and assure proper follow-up action is taken (work order for repair completed or item properly discarded)

DURING

1. Use portable tables **ONLY** for their intended use and observe weight limit capacities from the manufacturer.
 - DO NOT use portable tables as step stools or platforms to reach towards ceilings or walls. Obtain and maintain an appropriate step ladder for those purposes.
 - DO NOT sit on portable tables unless you specifically know the weight capacity of the table and are well within its limits. Obtain a chair for those purposes.
2. Move tables to the location of setup, preferably with an appropriate cart or dolly, or with the assistance of a second staff person, before opening them up. Sliding a table along a floor surface may also be an option, depending upon the floor surface material and whether the slide can be done without damaging the floor.. In general, use methods of moving tables which reduce awkward body postures and manual lifting.
3. To setup a table, the following is recommended:
 - Place the table on its side and open at least one set of legs, sliding the leg locking mechanism into place.
 - Assure both legs are open and locking mechanisms are in place prior to lifting.
 - If the table is light and short enough in length for you to lift safely, perform a **single person lift**. With knees appropriately bent (so that your leg muscles, not your back muscles, support the weight of the table), roll the table until at least one set of legs are down on the floor, then lower the lifted part to the floor.
 - If the table weight or length is such that assistance is needed to complete the task safely, perform a **two-person lift**. Coordinate when the lifting motion will be done, also assuring good lifting practices are used.
4. To take down a table, apply the same concepts as indicated above, but reverse the order.
5. If placing tables onto a cart for storage:
 - Make sure the cart is as close to the table as possible.
 - Engage wheel locks on the cart or assure wheel chocks are in place to prevent the cart from rolling during placement of the table.

- If tables are to be stacked flat on a cart, have table tops facing down to facilitate stability while stacking (allows you to manipulate the legs as necessary, and carry either closed or open to the cart).
- If tables are to be stacked on edge on a cart, the cart in general should be designed specifically to support the tables appropriately on the cart (balanced, stable, have side rails, etc.).

AFTER

1. Store tables in areas which are secure and out of the way. **DO NOT** block or restrict access to electrical panels, aisleways, doorways, storage rooms, closets, windows, etc.
2. If tables are stored stacked against a wall, make sure table tops are facing out, are angled enough, and not stacked too deep as to risk fall-over or collapse of the stack.