

GARBAGE COLLECTION

REVIEWED AUGUST 4, 2015

OH&S CODE Part 29 & 35

Those who do garbage collection must be aware of 5 most common types of hazard sources

1. **ERGONOMICAL** – Lifting & Carrying. Read Lifting & Carrying SWP & HAA
2. **BIOHAZARDS** – Especially where medical & food outlets are present
3. **SEVERE WEATHER** – Outdoor work. Read Severe Weather SWP & HAA
4. **CHEMICAL** – Various depending on businesses in area. Know where you can have access to MSDS.
5. **SHARP OBJECTS** – Medical supplies, glass, metal

1 Know Your Body

Custodians, janitors, and housekeepers suffer injuries that frequently involve bone, cartilage, muscle, and nerves.

The most common body parts affected:

- Neck
- Back
- Shoulders
- Arms
- Elbows
- Wrists/hands/fingers
- Knees

What Causes Injuries?

Certain actions can lead to fatigue, discomfort, or pain when you do them over and over without a break. Some examples of this include:

- Exerting force to perform a task or to use a tool (e.g., lifting tables or scrubbing with a brush)
- Working in awkward postures, such as bending or twisting the back, overhead reaching for dusting, or mopping with elbows away from the body
- Remaining in the same position for a long time with little or no movement
- Continuous pressure from a hard surface or edge on any part of the body (for example, kneeling or crawling)
- Working in hot or cold temperatures
- Holding equipment that vibrates (for example, the handle of a pressure washer)



Noticing Problems

If you feel discomfort, pain, or other symptoms, you must either change the way you work or the equipment you use. If no changes are made, your symptoms may get worse and keep you from working at all.

Watch for these signs & symptoms:

- Pain
- Numbness
- Tingling
- Swelling
- Weakness
- Decreased range of motion
- Cold hands
- Changes in skin color

If you Develop any Symptoms

- Talk with your supervisor about your symptoms right away
- Seek medical treatment to prevent the problem from getting worse
- Work with your supervisor and health & safety committee to find the cause of the problem
- Always look for better ways to do your job

Report any injuries to your supervisor right away

1 Know Your Body

21 Garbage: Managing Containers & Bags

REMEMBER

Don't assume that garbage cans weigh the same each time. Injuries can occur when lifting an unexpectedly heavy can.

The risks of injury are related to:

- Size of the garbage can
- Trying to predict the weight
- Suction (23) holding the bag in place
- Ability to replace lifting with pulling
- Controlling the weight of bag
- Method of transporting bag to dumpster (24)
- Mechanics of lifting bag into dumpster (24)

Container Size

The right capacity for the container is based on the size and weight of the items placed in it.

When collecting heavy articles (wet paper, books, food waste):

- Use a smaller container
- Put in a false bottom to reduce the available space

Controlling Bag Size

- Ensure the garbage bags are not overfilled
 - Place a false bottom (styrofoam blocks or cardboard box) in the container to "use up some of the capacity"
 - Tie off the bag when it's 1/2 (one-half) full and start a new bag on top of the first
 - Tie off the second bag when it reaches the top of the container at 1/2 (one-half) full



Distribute the weight evenly between two bags

Predicting the Weight

Often the person filling the container is not the person emptying it, so the containers may be overfilled.

- Test the load before lifting it, especially when a heavy load would be unusual

Times when garbage bags may be heavier than usual:

- Classroom set-up time
- Classroom clean-up time
- Special events (holidays, food days, graduation parties)

21 Garbage: Managing Containers & Bags

22 Garbage: Emptying Cans

Emptying the Cans

- ◆ Always wear gloves
- ◆ Check the weight of the can by tilting or pushing it
- ◆ Look over the contents of the can for sharp points or protrusions
- ◆ Grasp the lip around the rim of the can; use two hands if the can is heavy and avoid bending your wrists
- ◆ Change hands to pick up and lower trash cans
- ◆ Empty trash cans frequently to avoid accumulating heavy loads

Bend your knees and keep your back straight as you pick up or lower the cans



Position the can on the barrel rim before you empty the contents and replace the lining

Do not stoop over to line the can



22 Garbage: Emptying Cans

ORGANIZE YOUR WORK

- ✎ Plan your workday in advance
- ✎ Set the order of the tasks you have been assigned
- ✎ Make sure the tools and equipment are in good working order
- ✎ Identify special tasks that require additional personal protective equipment (PPE), materials, and other equipment
- ✎ Coordinate with other workers to arrange for help before starting the job
- ✎ Alternate heavy and lighter tasks throughout the day, where possible
- ✎ Establish the best way to accomplish each task – if in doubt, talk to your supervisor and ask questions
- ✎ Work in teams



WORKPLACE AWARENESS

- ✎ Report difficulties or unusual findings to your supervisor
- ✎ Pay attention to the task
 - Hazards are still present even though you may have been doing the work for years
- ✎ Be aware of your surroundings and changing conditions at all times
 - Wet floors
 - Swinging doors
 - Poor lighting
 - Uneven pavement
 - Placement of furnishings
- ✎ Remember to work safely to prevent injuries
 - Janitorial tasks are often repetitive
 - As you become accustomed to the work routine, you may overlook the hazards
 - A busy schedule, fatigue, or the past success of shortcuts may blind you to safety rules



23 Garbage: Pulling Bags

REMEMBER

Repeated heavy lifting is more difficult when the contents of the bag have been pushed down to avoid extra trips to the dumpster. A strong suction is generated and extra force is needed to pull the bag out.

Suction Effect

Garbage bags fit tightly against the walls of the container and create a suction effect. This makes it difficult to remove the bags by increasing the force required. In order to remove the bag, air must enter the space between the bag and container.

To reduce the suction

- Place a loosely fitting false bottom in the container (i.e., a light piece of foam, empty box placed upside down)



Drill holes in the sides or bottom of the container



Use barrels designed with lift vents

Maintaining Garbage Cans

- Empty cans before they are half full
- Do not overfill or compact trash in the barrel
- Ask for help when the bag is overfilled and too heavy

Pulling the Bag



Check the load & tie the bag



Hold bag close to body

Get help if the load is too heavy

Tilt and Pull

Put the container on its side and use a pulling motion to get the bag out to avoid awkward lifts above your shoulders.

23 Garbage: Pulling Bags

24 Garbage: Transporting/Lifting/Dumpsters

REMEMBER

The dumping of garbage bags requires repeated high force and high shoulder lifts to toss in bags.

Common problems

- Heavy lids with stiff hinges
- Overhead push of lids for shorter workers
- Need to hold lid open with one arm while throwing bag in with the other

Possible solutions

- Step stool - for better working height to throw in bags
- Locking hinge lid - to allow two-handed handling of bags

Transporting to Dumpster

- Always transport garbage bags to the dumpster with a cart
- Keep bags compact and light if no carts are available

Lifting to Dumpster

- Always wear gloves
- Roll barrels and other equipment containing trash bags as close to the dumpster as possible
- If the bag is too heavy, get help
- Use a step up platform next to the dumpster
- Avoid twisting and tossing side ways



With feet and body facing the dumpster, step closer and toss the bag forward into it



Place the dumpster next to the loading dock, if available

Dumpsters

Use a mechanized garbage dumpster, if available, to save time and effort and increase efficiency.



Portable trash dumper

Hydraulic lift truck

Tilt truck/hopper dumper

24 Garbage: Transporting/Lifting/Dumpsters



RELATED DOCUMENTATION:

Lifting & Carrying SWP & HAA

Custodial Work SWP & HAA

Severe Weather

HAZARD RATING **13/20**