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**Caution: See reverse
for safety instructions**

Important Safety Tips

Opening this flyer requires moving your wrists and fingers, which may result in hazardous strain. Below are some important ergonomic safety tips inspired by Washington's Department of Labor and Industries. If you do not wish to comply voluntarily, the tips will be enforced for your own good.

1. Reduce the horizontal distance between the flyer and your body.
2. Remove any barriers or obstacles between you and the flyer.
3. If the flyer is too heavy, team lift it with two or more family members.
4. If the flyer is still too heavy, use mechanical assists such as an overhead hoist, manipulator, vacuum lift, pneumatic balancer, or forklift.
5. Rotate the flyer among your family members to share the strain.

October 20, 2003

Dear At-Risk in Washington,

Ergonomics. It's sparked a multi-million dollar initiative campaign that has the ardent support of more than 300 businesses and associations across the state and the heated opposition of labor unions. What in the world is it?

The Webster's definition is pretty simple: "An applied science concerned with designing and arranging things people use so that the people and things interact most efficiently and safely."

Our state Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) has a slightly different definition: Applied laws to control the designing and arranging of the workplace so a new government industry can be created.

Bright bureaucrats have recognized that the number one cause of strained muscles and tendons is the act of using them. Amazingly, people move their bodies every day at work when they sit down in chairs, type on keyboards, stock grocery shelves, lay carpet, pound nails, prune trees and bushes, paint walls, etc.

For overzealous public servants, finding a way to regulate these everyday activities is like winning the lottery. Our state Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) has adopted a wonderful new set of rules to make sure our employers don't let us strain anything doing our jobs. From now on, workers will not be permitted (er . . . forced) to lift, grip, work with arms above the head, bend over, type intensively, squat or kneel more than two to four hours per day.

Never mind that for years businesses have been voluntarily seeking ways to make work more comfortable for workers as technology advances. After all, a healthy employee is a productive employee. Never mind that some experts estimate the cost of complying with the new ergonomic regulations will be nearly a billion dollars a year and jobs will be lost as a result.

Perhaps L&I thinks it can make up for these lost jobs with the many new positions it will create to show businesses how to comply with the simple new rule! L&I is already scheduling workshops, arranging specialized consulting sessions, producing instructional videos and compact discs in English and Spanish, designing interactive websites, publishing colored brochures and booklets, operating toll free numbers, etc. Maybe workers who get laid off in the private sector can even apply to become compliance officers in their old place of employment! The transition would be painless and it would bring new meaning to the phrase so common among co-workers, "Now, don't work too hard!"

This issue will come to a head on November 4 as voters in our state are asked to make a decision. A "Yes" vote on Initiative 841, will *repeal* the rules. A "No" vote will *preserve* the rules, allowing L&I to begin implementation starting next summer. Take a look inside for more information.

Regards,

Bob Williams
Evergreen Freedom Foundation

Facts about the Ergonomics Rule

- Washington's ergonomic rule was adopted in 2000 by unelected bureaucrats in the state Department of Labor and Industries (L&I). The rule will impact every business, employee and consumer in the state.
- Opponents of the rule include more than 300 businesses and associations, as well as two of the state's leading ergonomists (Certified Professional Ergonomists), who believe successful ergonomic safety standards will be achieved through creativity and cooperation, not regulation.
- Supporters of the rule include the Department of Labor and Industries and most of the state's labor unions.
- The ergonomics rule limits the amount of time a worker can spend doing activities considered "hazardous," such as those that require repetitive motion, lifting, gripping, working with arms above the head, squatting, kneeling, pinching, etc. Workers would be limited in those activities to no more than four hours a day in most cases, and as little as two hours in others.
- The rule requires that employers reduce worker hazards to the degree "technologically and economically feasible," but does not define what this means, leaving it open to broad agency interpretation.
- The broad nature of the rule will encourage frivolous lawsuits against employers.
- Washington is the only state in the nation with such a restrictive ergonomics rule. In 2001, the U.S. Congress voted to repeal a federal rule that was less expensive and less restrictive than Washington's.
- L&I says the cost of compliance with the rule will be \$80 million a year for businesses, but an independent study estimates it will cost closer to \$725 million in the first year alone.
- Every person in Washington will pay more because of the ergonomics regulations. For example, experts estimate the cost of a 2-story, 2,000-square-foot home will increase by an average of \$2,408.
- The ergonomics rule will cost jobs. Some employers will have to lay off workers or cancel plans to expand their businesses and hire new workers. L&I recognized this and gave exemptions to certain large corporations like Wal-Mart, Safeway and Ferguson Enterprises.
- On January 30, 2003, the Business Industry Association of Washington (BIAW) filed an initiative (I-841) that would repeal the ergonomics regulation, thus protecting small to medium businesses as well.

* Source: Workers Against Job Killing Rules

Are you at risk?

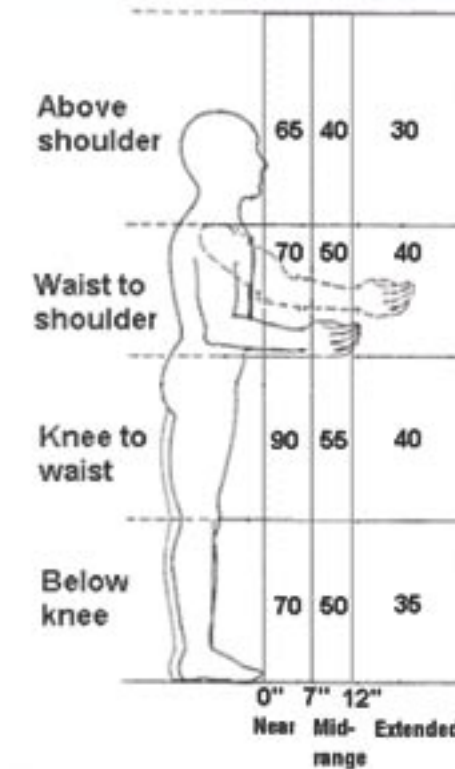
Find out with this one-size-fits-all "lifting calculator" developed by the Department of Labor and Industries. It's scientific! It assesses risk at home or at work! And employers need only complete it for every single one of their workers to ensure compliance with the rule!

This analysis only pertains if you have "caution zone jobs" where employees lift 10 lbs. or more (see WAC 296-62-05105, Heavy, Frequent, or Awkward Lifting) and you have chosen the specific performance approach.

Step 1 Find out the actual weight of objects that the employee lifts.

Actual Weight = _____ lbs.

Step 2 Determine the Unadjusted Weight Limit. Where are the employee's hands when they begin to lift or lower the object? Mark that spot on the diagram below. The number in that box is the Unadjusted Weight Limit in pounds.



Unadjusted Weight Limit: _____ lbs.

Step 3 Find the Limit Reduction Modifier. Find out how many times the employee lifts per minute and the total number of hours per day spent lifting. Use this information to look up the Limit Reduction Modifier in the table below.

How many lifts per minute?	For how many hours per day?		
	1 hr or less	1 hr to 2 hrs	2 hrs or more
1 lift every 2-5 mins.	1.0	0.95	0.85
1 lift every min	0.95	0.9	0.75
2-3 lifts every min	0.9	0.85	0.65
4-5 lifts every min	0.85	0.7	0.45
6-7 lifts every min	0.75	0.5	0.25
8-9 lifts every min	0.6	0.35	0.15
10+ lifts every min	0.3	0.2	0.0

Note: For lifting done less than once every five minutes, use 1.0

Limit Reduction Modifier: _____

Step 4 Calculate the Weight Limit. Start by copying the Unadjusted Weight Limit from Step 2.

Unadjusted Weight Limit: = _____ lbs.

If the employee twists more than 45 degrees while lifting, reduce the Unadjusted Weight Limit by multiplying by 0.85. Otherwise, use the Unadjusted Weight Limit

Twisting Adjustment: = _____

Adjusted Weight Limit: = _____ lbs.

Multiply the Adjusted Weight Limit by the Limit Reduction Modifier from Step 3 to get the Weight Limit.

Limit Reduction Modifier: _____ X

Weight Limit: = _____ lbs.

Step 5 Is this a hazard? Compare the Weight Limit calculated in Step 4 with the Actual Weight lifted from Step 1. If the Actual Weight lifted is greater than the Weight Limit calculated, then the lifting is a WMSD hazard and must be reduced below the hazard level or to the degree technologically and economically feasible.

Note: If the job involves lifts of objects with a number of different weights and/or from a number of different locations, use Steps 1 through 5 above to:

1. Analyze the two worst case lifts -- the heaviest object lifted and the lift done in the most awkward posture.
2. Analyze the most commonly performed lift. In Step 3, use the frequency and duration for all of the lifting done in a typical workday.