WEEKLY TOOLBOX TALK: MATERIAL HANDLING

Posted by Jorge Vazquez on February 10, 2014

Material Handling Instruction

You will need to demonstrate material handling with at least two different sizes of rock: refer to weight/loading information listed below that was obtained from our suppliers. You will need to demonstrate manual handling of studs and track of different gauges and types. Please read and cover the points addressed in this Tool Box Talk.

Make sure you wear gloves when handling metal: use this opportunity to review the importance of proper hand protection with your crew.

Drywall weighs 1.72 lbs. per sq. foot of ½ inch material, and 2.3 lbs. per sq. ft. of 5/8 material. Share the following numbers with you crews:

- 4’ x 10’ x 5/8  92 lbs. per sheet  184 lbs. per bundle  1,288 lbs. @14 sheet load
- 4’ x 10’ x ½  68.8 lbs. per sheet  138 lbs. per bundle  9,63 lbs. @14 sheet load
- 4’ x 12’ x 5/8  110 lbs. per sheet  221 lbs. per bundle  1,540 lbs. @14 sheet load
- 4’ x 12’ x ½  82.5 lbs. per sheet  165 lbs. per bundle  1,155 lbs. @14 sheet load

Carrying drywall requires technique and not brute strength.

Demonstrate how to pick-up one sheet of drywall off the dolly, using pivot points, reducing the load on back muscles. Show your crews how to load a dolly the same way.

Demonstrate sliding techniques to move drywall from the top of a stack. Show employees how to flip drywall using the stack as a resting point. (You are demonstrating how to protect the finish surface and all edges.)

Demonstrate loading the dolly with the weight shifted a few inches toward the non-turning wheels, so when you push and move the dolly, the turning wheels maneuver easily, safely and with a minimum of effort.

TRAIN ON PUSHING THE DOLLY – NOT PULLING THE LOAD.

TRAIN ALL EMPLOYEES THAT, IN THE EVENT THAT A LOAD OF DRYWALL BEGINS TO FALL OVER, THE ONLY SAFE ACTION IS TO LET THE LOAD FALL. 

Refer to the loaded weight chart above to make your point.
Show your employees how to keep the loaded dolly as close as possible to the area where the drywall will be installed. Remind all workers that this action eliminates carrying rock over long distances. Reduced lifting frequency = reduced risk of injury.

With metal studs and track, the important demonstration is not about the weight of the material. This part of your demonstration is about the jagged edges of these materials, which cut or lacerate at least 2 to 4 employees every week. Show employees how to keep their hands away from the punch holes.

Tip To Supervisors: An effective demonstration here requires a short piece of safety rope and small piece (36 inches) of light gauge track or stud. Using your snips cut one end of the metal at a forty-five degree angle. Now cut the rope against the edge of the metal to demonstrate how easily it will cut. The visual picture you are creating for your employees is one of cut materials being as sharp as a knife.

To complete your demonstration, show employees how to handle bundles of various types of metals, stressing teamwork. Handling long pieces of metal requires coordination with a partner and controlled movements. Have some experienced employees demonstrate how you want these materials moved on your jobsite.

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