

# Lifting Injuries in Supermarkets

Over 1400 supermarket workers were seriously injured lifting objects in the years 2000-2004 resulting in nearly 12,000 days off work.

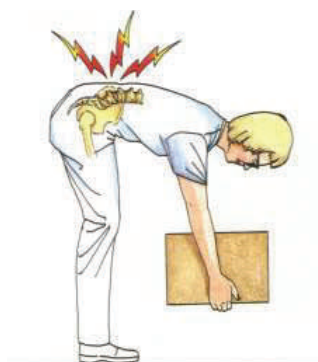


These lifting injuries were so serious workers had to take time off work to recover, or in some cases were permanently disabled. Serious injuries are costly and affect your industrial insurance premiums. They contribute to the reason for the average base rate of \$.60 per hour per employee paid by supermarket employers in 2006. If your company has a higher than average number of injuries (claims), your "experience rating" could increase by as much as 25% in one year to \$.75 per hour per employee.

Stated in another way, if you had 10 full-time employees and had an average number of injuries (claims), you would pay about \$12,000 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay about \$3,000 more or \$15,000 in premiums in 2006.

## Causes or sources of injury

Supermarket workers injure themselves lifting boxes, bags, milk and other liquid containers, pallets and trays. Over half of these lifting injuries were from lifting and carrying boxes and bags. Over 700 of the injuries were to the back, followed by the shoulder (200+) and abdomen (100+).



## Ways to prevent injuries

- Provide carts and other material handling equipment for transport of produce, canned products and cooler products.
- Get help for any lifts which feel to you to be too heavy for you.
- Remove any barriers between you and the lifted object, if possible.
- If possible use more staff for shelving tasks to reduce the exposure on individuals.
- When stocking shelves and coolers, store products for shelving between knee and shoulder height.
- Talk to suppliers about providing milk in four gallon lugs.

