

# Wholesale and Retail Trade: NORA Sector Council Bulletin

## May 2011, Volume 1, Issue 6



We are listening!

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### Inside the Manual Materials Handling Workshop Planning Committee

New Agenda combines Panel 1 and Panel 2.

**WRT website:**

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/draftwrt>

**UC website:**

<http://www.eh.uc.edu/MMHworkshop>

**To register for the Workshop and learn more.**

**EASE website:** <http://www.mhia.org/>

### The WRT Campaign to Lift at the Right Height

This campaign was initiated to “Lift at the Right Height” in recognition of **the growing rates of “overexertion” injuries highlighted over the last five years by Liberty Mutual’s Research Division in their annual reports on the state of workplace health.**

**According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), overexertion is the primary hazard identified or associated with manual lifting.**

## NIOSH and Industry Updates

Six Demonstrations Project show What Could Be Done.



WRT leadership wanted to determine the reaction of store personnel and management to some “new lift assist devices” that were designed to reduce back fatigue and overexertion from lifting and carrying materials required to stock shelves. [The above pictures are shown as examples and not as an endorsement by NIOSH]. Researchers from various organizations were given the task of finding one or more stores that would be willing to participate in the project and then report back the reactions of the store participants to the lift assist equipment. [Store identities were hidden]. The reports provided important information about the strengths and weaknesses of the new lift assist equipment. The lift assist equipment was designed to show how ergonomically designed manual materials handling equipment could be used to reduce the physical burden of manual lifting, which is a common problem in these jobs. The general consensus was that there is a need and market for equipment that would reduce the risk of overexertion injury in manual handling jobs, but that such equipment may have to be customized to better fit the needs of the store applications. The theme was “there must be a better way.”

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The WRT campaign is not just a reminder about lifting at or about the waist, but more importantly the slogan”

**“To Lift at the Right Height” is a notice to the WRT industry that many material handling jobs in these businesses need some form of mechanical assist to maintain the load or materials at the “right height” which is at or about the waist level.**

One of the primary impediment in achieving the goals of the WRT lifting campaign has been a “lack of awareness that such equipment existed” and correspondingly there has been, as some might say, a similar “lack of existing equipment that is well suited to the retail work place.

**In response, a manual materials workshop has been planned for the fall of 2011. The goal of the workshop is to lay the plans for the development of material handling equipment that would meet the needs of the WRT sector.**

## Ohio Work Comp Bureau Offering Safety Grants to Wholesale, Retail Employers

Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation (BWC) Administrator/CEO Stephen Buehrer has announced a grant program to reduce or eliminate occupational injuries and illnesses in the wholesale/retail trade sector. As part of BWC’s ongoing research partnership with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to enhance safety practices for Ohio’s workforce, the program provides funds to employers in this sector to purchase safety equipment while participating in a study that will guide future programming and establish best practices for accident and injury prevention.

Participating employers will receive 2-to-1 matching funds, up to \$40,000, through BWC’s SafetyGRANTs Program to purchase equipment that can reduce workplace injuries and illnesses. In return, employers agree to take part in a two-year follow-up study with BWC and NIOSH to determine the cost effectiveness of these interventions in reducing occupational injuries. BWC entered into a research partnership with NIOSH last fall to examine why injuries occur, and how to help Ohio businesses prevent accidents in the future. This study of the wholesale/retail trade sector represents the first major collaboration resulting from the partnership. The goal is to reduce injuries and illnesses, particularly musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and traumatic slip/trip/fall injuries that are prevalent in this industry. MSDs account for 40 percent of lost-time claims in this industry; sprains and strains account for 77 percent of these MSDs.

Eligible employers pay into the State Insurance Fund and operate in the wholesale/retail trade sector, or perform delivery operations of large items (e.g., appliances, furniture, vending machines, furnaces, water heaters, etc). Half of the participating employers will receive funds when the study begins this winter; the other half will receive them in spring 2012.

Source: Ohio BWC

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About NIOSH: As part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NIOSH is the Federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations to prevent work-related illnesses and injuries. To receive NIOSH documents or more information about occupational safety and health topics, please contact NIOSH at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) TTY: 1-888-232-6348 Email: [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov) Website: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/)

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