

# NORA Sector Council Bulletin Wholesale & Retail *Trades*

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF  
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE FOR A SAFE FUTURE

## Workplace Solutions *Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls*

Employees in Wholesale and Retail Trade (WRT) establishments suffer high rates of slip, trip and fall (STF) injuries. Slips, trips and falls are the second most common cause of lost-workday injuries in general industry and can cause back injuries, sprains, strains, contusions, fractures, severe head injuries, paralysis and fatalities.

NIOSH published a Simple Solutions publication describing the risk factors involved and steps to take in preventing slips, trips and falls.

Most STF incidents can be prevented with proper attention to three risk factors categories:

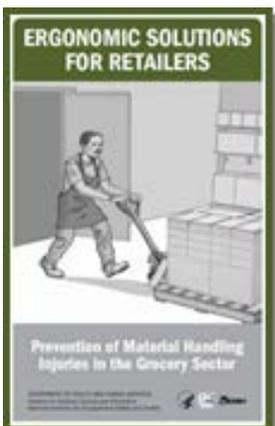
workplace, workflow, and the individual. Steps are outlined in the document to prevent injuries related to slips, trips and same-level falls. This includes employer and worker responsibilities.

Training is an important element of identifying and preventing STFs. Informing employees who to call to report identified hazards or arrange clean up or repair are big parts of the solution. Footwear choices can contribute to reducing STFs. Wearing slip-resistant shoes can be a chief component of preventing STFs.

To learn more, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2013-100>.



All photos courtesy of Thinkstock



## Ergonomic Solutions for Retailers

This new booklet is designed for retailers and safety experts. It illustrates the use of mechanical assist devices for reducing manual material handling (MMH) injuries in retail grocery work. Illustrations depict employees in a retail grocery store using mechanical assist devices to perform material handling tasks. Technology presented will also support a retailer's growing internet sales that depend on moving large quantities of merchandise in a short time [and often] with fewer employees.

Obtain this publication at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2015-100>

You may also order a copy at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348.



# Emerging Issues

## *In Wholesale & Retail Trades*

A number of emerging issues within the Wholesale and Retail Trade (WRT) sector will influence the pattern of injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. Many of these emerging issues are linked to changes in the economy and the global market that are having an impact on all industry sectors to varying degrees.

Some of the emerging issues facing the 21 million workers who staff the 1.6 million workplaces include (1) long work hours, (2) shift work, and (3) work stress from serving the public, in either direct or telemarketing sales.

Health and retirement benefits are disappearing, which can cause work-related stress in managing illnesses.

Just in time shipping and order filling is increasing causing time pressure and lack of work control.

Psychosocial problems are increasing that can fuel workplace violence.

As the e-market grows, internet sales and 7-day delivery requires that the supply-chain be as efficient as possible. This puts pressure on material handling systems and employees who move the goods and merchandise to the customers' doors.

Employees, regardless of age, size, and strength, may have to step into jobs that are considered heavy work. They may also need to fill large orders in shorter periods.

Musculoskeletal disorders continue to be a burden to workers, but some of the stress loads are shifting from the low back and legs to the upper extremities and shoulders/neck.

Some positive emerging trends are seen from those WRT employers who have invested

in material handling equipment. The forward thinking businesses are experiencing (1) increases in productivity, (2) fewer complaints of fatigue and overexertion injuries, and (3) increases in the longevity of their most productive and experienced employees.

The appropriate material handling equipment reduces lifting burdens, although there appears to be an increasing need to use keyboards and monitoring systems. Research needs to be sensitive to low force, high speed repetitive activities, and static postures as potential emerging WRT issues.

For additional information, or ergonomics guidance for employers, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/wrt/emerging.html>.

# RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

## *Productivity*



Historically, NIOSH is a leader in applying research to workplace solutions that reduce injury and illness.

[Research to Practice \(r2p\)](#) is a NIOSH initiative focused on the transfer and translation of research findings, technologies, and information into highly effective prevention practices and products that are adopted in the workplace.

The goal of r2p is to increase workplace use of effective NIOSH and NIOSH-funded research findings. NIOSH continues to work with our partners to focus research on ways to develop effective products, translate research findings into practice, target dissemination efforts, and evaluate and demonstrate the effectiveness of these efforts in improving worker safety and health.

*All photos courtesy of Thinkstock*



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