

## Materials Handling

The wine industry uses a combination of employees, tools and equipment to move around the materials needed to create the perfect vintage. When employees do the bulk of the moving or handling it is called manual materials handling (MMH). MMH is accomplished by various lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, and holding tasks. These tasks can be seen in your cellars, bottling lines, warehouses, and tasting rooms. MMH is often at the root of occupation fatigue, low back pain, and lower back injuries. Carefully designed organization of work flow, job and workstation design, and training can help prevent these injuries.

- There may be methods to reduce/eliminate MMH in job tasks. Consider using mechanical handling systems such as conveyor systems, lift tables, or hoists.
- Decrease the physical demands of the tasks. Consider using mechanical aids such as hand trucks, pallet jacks, wheeled platforms, dollies or forklifts.
- Reduce awkward postures and forces needed to perform MMH tasks.
- Utilize job rotation to other work areas to allow recovery time.
- Allow more time for repetitive tasks to decrease the frequency.
- Designate times for rest breaks to allow recovery time.
- Keep travel paths in good condition. Require employees to include housekeeping in their job tasks and to remove obstacles in their travel paths.
- Provide back injury prevention training to employees to establish understanding of safe lifting procedures, and knowledge of company resources to move materials.
- Require employees to use lifting and carrying aids, such as pallet jacks, carts, dollies, lift tables, vacu-hoists, or request assistance from coworkers, whenever possible.

Zenith provides workplace safety resources at: **TheZenith.com**<sup>®</sup>