

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Builders' supplies wholesaling

These are the most common injuries to workers in the builders' supplies wholesaling sector* based on accepted workers' compensation claims

* The builders' supplies wholesaling sector includes organisations mainly involved in timber wholesaling or dealing with builders' hardware or building materials (e.g. cement, bricks, roofing materials, paint and plaster, doors and windows and screens, bathroom fittings, swimming pools).

Eye

Fragments in eyes from grinding metal and cutting timber, and raised dust from driving forklifts

5%

Shoulder

Sprains and strains from manually handling timber

7%

Wrist

Sprains and strains from manually handling timber

4%

24%

Hand and fingers

Cuts and wounds from moving sheet metal, cutting or moving sawn or dressed timber, and getting splinters

Back

Sprains and strains from manually handling timber

21%

Lower leg

Cuts and wounds from walking into pieces of metal

4%

Knee

Sprains and strains from tripping on wood and concrete on the ground

5%

Ankle

Sprains and strains from falling over timber on the ground

4%

Foot and toes

Bruises from falling or dropped sawn or dressed timber

4%

Source: Queensland Employee Injury Database. Data current as at March 2011 and is subject to change over time. Based on accepted workers' compensation claims, excluding commuting claims, from 2000-01 to December 2010.



Health and safety tips

Employers should undertake a risk management process in order to protect workers by preventing or minimising the risk of injuries in their workplace. Below are some health and safety tips to reduce the risk of injury. Employers should work with their employees to ensure the most effective solutions are put in place.

Manual tasks	
Activities/instructions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For work involving hard physical effort: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use mechanical and assistive equipment/devices buy small, light cartons of stock train workers in safe use of equipment/devices. For work involving awkward or static working positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adjust work spaces to allow for different working heights for different sized workers work in a position that minimises the need to twist, slouch or bend with arms in close to body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For work that is highly repetitive or done for long periods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> automate manual tasks use mechanical and assistive equipment/devices job rotation (e.g. to tasks that use different parts of the body). Avoid using vibrating hand tools or sitting or standing on vibrating equipment (e.g. forklifts) for long periods of time. If possible, replace with equipment that causes less vibration.
Slips, trips and falls	
Activities/instructions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install slip-resistant flooring surfaces or apply treatments, such as sandblasting to existing flooring. Fit barriers and railings to mezzanine floors to prevent falls and falling objects. Keep work areas and walkways clear and tidy. Keep power cords away from thoroughfares or taped down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect delivery and storage areas regularly for hazards. Paint the edges of large pieces of equipment to make them more visible. Do not climb on objects or surfaces – use equipment such as ladders or step stools. Wear non-slip and appropriate footwear.
Knives, sharp tools and personal protective equipment (PPE)	
Activities/instructions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the correct knife or sharp tool for the task, including retractable or safety blades. Knives and tools should be maintained in good working condition. Train and instruct your workers about using and maintaining knives and sharp tools. Provide accessible first aid equipment and trained first aid officers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select appropriate PPE for the work to be performed (e.g. gloves, protective footwear, hearing protection, respirators and masks, safety or sun glasses, hats and trousers). Use PPE in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Ensure all workers wear PPE and they are instructed in its proper use.
Forklifts	
Activities/instructions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make areas safe for pedestrians by using exclusion zones, physical barriers, speed limiting, and traffic management systems. Make work areas safe for the use of forklift trucks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fit raised edges on loading docks install warning signs or barricades provide adequate lighting fit secure ramps to access work areas. Make sure all forklift operators hold a licence to operate the forklift or the person is a trainee in the operation of forklifts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a thorough inspection of the forklift truck and attachments such as lift and tilt systems, steering, brakes, controls, tyres, warning devices, load arms, brake fluid, hydraulic oil before starting each shift. Have a method for determining the weights of loads being handled. Make sure the forklift's load is safe and secure on the tynes before moving.
Machinery and equipment	
Activities/instructions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fit guards to machinery and equipment with moving parts. Keep machine guarding in place and do not remove, disable or disengage when operating. Use machinery and equipment in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Display operating instructions and safety information near machinery and equipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train operators in how to operate machinery properly. Make sure machinery and equipment is in good working order and implement a system for reporting faults. Remove any damaged or faulty equipment from work area where practical and/or isolate, lock out and tag to prevent use.
Young workers	
Activities/instructions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that younger workers are still physically growing and may also lack understanding, experience and/ or confidence in performing their duties safely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induct, train and place younger workers with a suitable mentor to demonstrate and reinforce sound and safe work practices.

For further information visit www.worksafe.qld.gov.au
or call the Workplace Health and Safety Infoline on 1300 369 915.