SAFE HANDLING OF WOODEN PALLETS

This easy-to-use Leader’s Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation. Featured are:

INTRODUCTION: A brief description of the program and the subject that it addresses.

PROGRAM OUTLINE: Summarizes the program content. If the program outline is discussed before the video is presented, the entire program will be more meaningful and successful.

PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION: These sections will help you set up the training environment, help you relate the program to site-specific incidents, and provide program objectives for focusing your presentation.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Questions may be copied and given to participants to document how well they understood the information that was presented. Answers to the review questions are provided separately.

INTRODUCTION

Wooden pallets are very useful in material handling because they allow us to stack and move materials safely and quickly. They are used in almost all industrial and warehouse environments. Although we tend to forget about the hazards associated with pallets, each year many people suffer injuries from mishandling and misusing them.

This program reviews the basic safety rules and proper work methods needed to work safely with wooden pallets.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

PALLET LOADING

• Pallets come in different sizes and are constructed in various ways.

• Each size and construction has different weight and load ranges and must be used according to your company’s specifications.

• The size and loading of a pallet can affect the forklift or other material handling equipment.

• As the load center of a pallet increases, the lifting capacity of the forklift decreases.

PALLET INSPECTION

• Before using a pallet, make sure it can be safely stored in a rack with a heavy load. It should be constructed of hardwood and be in good condition.

• Top and bottom boards should be in place and should not be cracked or have pieces missing.

• Stringers should be in good repair; if they are damaged, they should be properly repaired with plugs or mending tape.

• There must be no protruding nails or slivers of wood on the pallet.

• If it is determined that a pallet is unsafe, it should be taken out of service until it can be repaired.

HANDLING AND USING PALLETs

• Always wear gloves when handling wooden pallets.

• Because they are heavy and awkward to carry, move a pallet by standing on its edge and sliding it.

• Don’t throw pallets because you can injure yourself and damage the pallet.

• Don’t store pallets on their edges or ends. Pallets stored on edges tend to fall and cause injuries.
• Walk around pallets and not on them; many falls occur while attempting to walk on a pallet.

• Separate pallets into stacks of usable pallets and those that need service. Don’t mix unsafe pallets with those ready for use.

• Don’t manually stack pallets more than 7 or 8 high; use forklifts to make stacks higher.

• To properly stack pallets, slide the pallet to one side of the stack. Using proper lifting motion, slide the pallet up the side of the stack and onto the top.

**SUMMARY**

• Because pallets are used on a daily basis, material handlers often don’t think about pallet safety.

• Take the time to think about a large load lifted 20 feet in the air. Will the pallet be sturdy enough to hold it?

• It takes an effort on everyone’s part to make pallet safety a part of the everyday operation.
PREPARE FOR THE SAFETY MEETING OR TRAINING SESSION
Review each section of this Leader's Guide as well as the videotape. Here are a few suggestions for using the program:

Make everyone aware of the importance the company places on health and safety and how each person must be an active member of the safety team.

Introduce the videotape program. Play the videotape without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Copy the review questions included in this Leader's Guide and ask each participant to complete them.

Copy the attendance record as needed and have each participant sign the form. Maintain the attendance record and each participant's test paper as written documentation of the training performed.

Here are some suggestions for preparing your videotape equipment and the room or area you use:

Check the room or area for quietness, adequate ventilation and temperature, lighting and unobstructed access.

Check the seating arrangement and the audiovisual equipment to ensure that all participants will be able to see and hear the videotape program.

Place or secure extension cords to prevent them from becoming a tripping hazard.

CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION
Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person the opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.

Explain that the primary purpose of the program is to explain the basic safety rules and proper work methods needed to work safely with wooden pallets.

Introduce the videotape program. Play the videotape without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline. Lead discussions about specific incidents or situations that have occurred involving the use of pallets. Use the review questions to check how well the program participants understood the information.

After watching the videotape program, the viewer will be able to explain the following:

• How to properly load a pallet;

• Proper inspection of pallets;

• How to safely handle and use pallets.
SAFE HANDLING OF WOODEN PALLETS

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Name____________________________Date______________________

The following questions are provided to determine how well you understand the information presented in this program.

1. All pallets should be inspected before use.
   a. true
   b. false

2. List three things that should be included in a pallet inspection.

3. You should always wear _____________ when handling wooden pallets.

4. Don’t manually stack pallets higher than _________________.

5. Which of the following is **not** a basic pallet safety rule?
   a. Don’t throw pallets.
   b. Don’t walk on pallets.
   c. Always stack pallets on their ends.
   d. Always inspect pallets before use.

6. Why shouldn’t you carry a pallet?

7. As the load center of a pallet increases, the lifting capacity of the forklift _________________.

ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. a
2. the pallet is good condition, top and bottom boards in place, boards of proper thickness, boards not cracked or broken, stringers in good repair, no protruding nails or splinters
3. gloves
4. 7 or 8 pallets high
5. c
6. because they weigh about 65 lbs and are very awkward to carry
7. decreases