

Safety Flash

Incident with Recordable Injury

Incident: At about 9:30 a.m., a mason tender was working on a scaffold that provided 4 feet of safe surface for stacking and moving block. He squatted slightly in front of an 8-inch block on the deck. Resting one hand on a stack of three blocks for support, he used the other hand to lift and turn the block to move it forward into position for the mason to install. At that time, he felt a sharp pain in his back.



A re-enactment of the incident

Possible contributing factors

- The worker was not in the proper vertical body position for lifting because he was squatting only slightly, steadying his body with one hand and leaning over to pick up the block.
- Due to the material staging requirements and weight constraints, the block needed to be placed in phases requiring movement by hand.
- Mason tenders perform multiple tasks which require repetitive movements throughout the day.
- The worker's STAC did not include lifting or body mechanics.
- The worker did not stretch or warm up before starting work.

Primary contributing factors

- The worker was not in the proper vertical body position for lifting because he was squatting only slightly, steadying his body with one hand and leaning over to pick up the block.
- Mason tenders perform multiple tasks which require repetitive movements throughout the day.

Possible Solutions

- Stack block in a different way to reduce the need to bend over when positioning block for masons to install.
- Perform an ergonomic assessment of mason tender tasks and consider using alternate construction methods, such as using lightweight block.
- Review with all workers on site how to identify and address individual hazards/tasks on STACs.
- Implement a stretching/warmup program for workers.
- Communicate safe work practices for lifting and material handling.

Action Plan

- The crew will evaluate the effectiveness of stacking block on end to reduce bending when moving block into place for masons to install.
- The project team will review proper completion of STACs with all trades and crews.
- RLI and the customer will evaluate ergonomic information and investigate developing a pilot program for RLI workers on the site to address stretching/warmup and safe manual material handling.

Keep improving

Your health and safety are our core value on every project. If you see a way we can support you in keeping our job sites safe, see your supervisor or contact: Jim Philo, 419/654-2043; Mark Hoffman, 419/360-9280; Bill Frantz, Michigan, 734/812-7294 or Bob Deskins, Cleveland, 440/653-6877.