

# Safe Lifting

## FROM THE **ADid You Know?** @ E-MAIL SERIES PROVIDED BY THE NOVA SCOTIA UNION OF PUBLIC & PRIVATE EMPLOYEES

Unless you're a princess or prince **B** in which case you've been holding out on your co-workers **B** at some point you will be faced with lifting something at work. You've all heard the guidelines for safe lifting before, but read them again. Your back will thank you for it.

1. **ASK FOR HELP.** No NSUPE job description (currently) says **A**Must be able to lift like Superwoman or Superman<sup>®</sup>. If the load is too heavy or awkward, don't lift it by yourself.
2. **BEND YOUR KNEES.** Bend your knees, not your waist. This lets the strong muscles in your legs do the lifting.
3. **GET A GRIP.** On the object, you're lifting that is. If you can't get a good grip, you need to get someone else to help.
4. **HUG THE LOAD.** This is probably the only time you should hug something at work. Hold the object you are lifting as close to your body as possible as you straighten your legs to a standing position.
5. **AVOID TWISTING.** Save the twist for the dance floor. When you lift, make sure your feet, knees and torso are all pointed in the same direction. Twisting can affect your balance or overload your spine.
6. **HAVE FIRM FOOTING.** Those three-inch spikes look great (although perhaps a bit much in a NSUPE workplace) but they're no good for lifting. Depending on just how heavy the load is, maybe even the sneakers should be ditched in favour of steel-toed boots. Finally, make sure the route to where you will be setting down the object is clear.
7. **GET IN SHAPE.** Years of poor posture, overeating, lack of exercise, stress and improper lifting can catch up with you **B** not that this applies to any NSUPE members. Rather, maybe what we should say is, **KEEP IN SHAPE.**

**NOTE:** The **ADid You Know?**@ series is general information only. For advice specific to your workplace or personal circumstances, please contact a union representative. Comments are welcome at [nsupe@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:nsupe@ns.sympatico.ca).