

# ERGONOMICS PROGRAM



# **CITY OF REEDLEY ERGONOMICS PROGRAM**

## **1. POLICY**

It is the policy of City of Reedley to provide all employees with a safe and healthy workplace. We are committed to reducing and/or eliminating the risk factors associated with musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).

An ergonomics program is a systematic process that communicates information so adequate and feasible solutions to ergonomic risks can be implemented to improve the workplace. The two most essential pieces of a successful ergonomics program are management commitment and employee involvement.

The City of Reedley has implemented an Ergonomics Program that includes the following components:

- A written ergonomics program
- Identification and prioritization of high-risk jobs and tasks
- Training for management and employees
- Implementation of control measures and follow-up evaluation
- A process for early intervention and medical management

This program enables City of Reedley to meet the requirements of the California Ergonomics Standard (8 CCR, Section 5110), which targets repetitive motion injuries (RMIs) (i.e., MSDs). This program is integrated into the City's written Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP), Standard (8 CCR, Section 3203), referring to hazard assessment and hazard correction as they relate to ergonomic exposures.

## **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the ergonomics program is to apply ergonomic principles to the workplace in an effort to reduce or eliminate the number and severity of MSDs, thus increasing employee productivity, quality, and efficiency, while decreasing workers' compensation claims.

City of Reedley is committed to a proactive approach to ergonomics. A proactive approach seeks to anticipate and prevent ergonomic issues. Identifying and prioritizing jobs with increased risk factors is a critical step in our program. Once risks are identified and prioritized the focus is then on: (1) making changes before an injury/illness has occurred, (2) incorporating ergonomics into the design phase of a new facility or process, and (3) purchasing the appropriate equipment and tools.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 Management**

Management supports the Ergonomics Program with adequate resources and active participation in the identification and control of ergonomic risk factors. Management will support an effective MSD

reporting system and will respond promptly to reports. Management will regularly communicate with employees about the program. Duties of all management will include:

- Active support and participation in the ergonomics program including review of job hazard analyses conducted in their departments and the implementation of effective control measures.
- Encourage active participation by employees in the ergonomics program, including attendance at required training and participation in the development of controls.
- Attend ergonomics training for managers to ensure the recognition and control of work-related ergonomic risk factors in their operations, MSD signs and symptoms, early reporting requirements and procedures, and medical management.
- Ensure early reporting of symptoms is encouraged in their department and provide a prompt response.
- Ensure the implementation of recommended controls and develop a system to monitor their effectiveness.

### **3.2 Employees**

Employees are an essential element to the success of the ergonomics program and will be asked for their input and assistance with identifying ergonomic risk factors, worksite evaluations, development, and implementation of controls and training.

Every employee of City of Reedley is responsible for conducting himself/herself in accordance with this policy and program. All employees will:

- Use the appropriate tools, equipment, parts, materials, and procedures in the manner established by managers and supervisors and report when they are not in good condition.
- Attend ergonomics training as required and apply the knowledge and skills acquired to actual jobs, tasks, processes, and work activities.
- Report MSD signs or symptoms and work-related MSD hazards to his/her manager/supervisor as early as possible to facilitate proactive interventions and/or prompt medical treatment.
- Take responsibility for his/her personal health and safety.

## **4. ERGONOMICS PROGRAM**

### **4.1 Identification of High-Risk Jobs**

Surveillance refers to the collection of data to identify jobs or tasks where employees are at high-risk for an ergonomics injury. The supervisor and employee will use a combination of methods to identify and prioritize high-risk jobs.

The following is a list of methods that may be used to identify and prioritize high-risk jobs:

- The review and analysis of loss run data
- Review of Cal/OSHA 300 log
- Tracking other contributing events or conditions by department and/or job tasks
- Discomfort surveys and questionnaires
- Walk-through observations (including video and digital pictures)

- Employee interviews
- Checklists
- Detailed worksite evaluations

## 4.2 Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)

A job hazard analysis may be performed and documented by the supervisor for identified high-risk jobs. Job hazard analysis consists of four steps: (1) breaking a job down into its various steps, (2) identifying the risk factors associated with each step, (3) recommending control measures to reduce/eliminate the risk factors, and (4) following up on any changes made.

High-risk jobs/tasks may be evaluated for the following risk factors:

- Awkward postures
  - Neck: Looking upward, backward, and sideways (extension, flexion, lateral rotation and lateral flexion)
  - Shoulders/Arms: Over reaching - forward, backward, over shoulders, and across the body
  - Elbow/Forearms: Rotating forearm palm up and palm down (supination and pronation), and raising elbows
  - Wrists/Hands: Bending forward, backward, spreading fingers, and using power grip (flexion, extension, deviation)
  - Upper and Lower Back: Bending forward and backward at the hips, bending sideways and twisting (flexion, extension, lateral flexion)
  - Legs/Knees: Standing on one leg, kneeling, and squatting
- Repetitive motion: number of movements per – using oil guns, wrenches, screwdrivers, air wrenches
- Forceful exertion: Lifting tires, batteries, using wrenches, screwdrivers, and other high torque tools
- Contact stress: Compression of any part of the body that decreases blood flow and compresses tendons, muscles, and ligaments such as kneeling on floor, resting on edge of vehicle when working under the hood, compressing and extending hands when using a computer
- Vibration: Using power tools or driving vehicles
- Other factors: Such as lighting and temperature

Employees familiar with the job should be interviewed and participate in evaluating the tasks. This process will result in practical recommendations with a high level of acceptance by the employees performing the task.

The findings of the job analysis will be reviewed and recommendations made by the supervisor for control measures. In some cases, professional assistance by a qualified ergonomics professional may be required. All recommendations will be based on the following hierarchy of controls (in order of priority):

**Engineering Controls** are the preferred methods for controlling ergonomic hazards. Engineering controls encompass the redesigning of the workplace and the elimination of the risk factors or hazards. Examples of engineering controls include:

- Restructure tasks to eliminate/reduce risk (reduce required movement, travel distance, or weight). The various departments/work areas are all interrelated and must work together to improve the work process.
- Provide adequate space for required task motions.
- Select adjustable equipment (and train workers to use the adjustments).
- Purchase equipment/tools to eliminate or reduce the exposure (mechanical lifts, properly designed tools, carts, tables, adjustable keyboard trays, chairs, footstools, anti-fatigue mats, etc.).

**Administrative Controls** are workplace policies, procedures, and practices that minimize the exposure of workers to risk conditions (i.e., remove the worker). Administrative controls are considered less effective than engineering controls in that they do not usually eliminate the hazard. Examples of administrative controls include:

- Provide adequate rest breaks to relieve fatigued muscle-tendon groups.
- Increase the number of employees assigned to a particular task.
- Establish job/task rotation or reduce overtime to minimize the exposure.
- Implement a preventative maintenance program to ensure equipment is in proper working order (i.e. wheels on carts, portable equipment, etc.).
- Implement a housekeeping program to minimize ergonomic and safety hazards.
- Provide training for employees in proper work techniques (body mechanics, lifting, proper use of lifting equipment, proper workstation set-up, maintenance, and use of all equipment, etc.).
- Monitor work practices and reinforce safe work practices and procedures.
- Encourage changing of task frequently to avoid over exposure to repetitive motion to a particular limb.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** requires an employee to use equipment to prevent exposure to the ergonomic risk factor/hazard and is considered the least effective control measure. Examples of PPE include:

- Gloves that absorb vibration
- Gloves that protect the hands from cuts
- Clothes/gloves that protect against the cold
- Gel shoe insoles to cushion the foot/lower extremity when walking on hard surfaces

Follow-up is an essential step in the ergonomics process. The supervisor should follow-up with the employee in approximately 30 days after the recommendations have been implemented. The follow up should evaluate the effectiveness of the controls and look for any additional problems that may have been created. Modifications or revisions should be recommended if needed.

### 4.3 Reporting Procedures

- Employees who experience discomfort or symptoms associated with MSDs shall immediately report verbally and/or in writing, to their direct supervisor.
- Any injury identified and diagnosed as a work-related MSD by a licensed health-care provider will be immediately reported to the supervisor.
- Supervisors or any member of management who acquire information that an employee is experiencing symptoms of a MSD will address the concern immediately.
- The Supervisor will ensure appropriate action is taken and orders an ergonomic evaluation if needed.
- Upon receipt of a request for an evaluation, modification, or accommodation the supervisor shall take appropriate action to resolve the concern.

### 4.4 Worksite Evaluation

Any employee may request an ergonomic assessment of work area(s) or work process(es) by contacting their supervisor. The Supervisor will conduct an ergonomic evaluation within 30 days and provide written documentation to the employee with recommendations to reduce/eliminate ergonomic risk factors within two weeks after the evaluation.

The employee and supervisor should meet to discuss and develop recommendations to improve the work area. In some circumstances, i.e., when additional expertise in ergonomics is needed, worksite evaluations shall be performed by a qualified ergonomics professional.

Worksite evaluations and recommended ergonomic solutions will be documented. The evaluation records will be kept with the safety records in the Human Resources Department.

The employee's direct supervisor will be responsible for implementing any recommended corrective actions. The employee will be informed by his/her supervisor of the potential exposures and recommended solutions. The employee will be asked for input regarding ideas about improving ergonomics in his/her work area.

The employee will be responsible for using equipment correctly and performing tasks as outlined in the corrective action plan.

### 4.5 Training

Training will be provided to the managers, supervisors, and employees to ensure effective ergonomics program implementation.

**General Ergonomics Awareness Training** will be provided and documented for all levels of management and all employees. Managers and supervisors responsible for program implementation will be trained to ensure they understand their program responsibilities. All employees will receive training when the program is introduced by their supervisor and if any newly identified ergonomic issues present themselves. New employee orientation training will include ergonomics awareness training.

General awareness training will cover all of the following topics plus any determined by City of Reedley:

- Ergonomics Program
- Risk factors associated with MSDs
- Symptoms and consequences of injuries caused by MSDs
- Importance of early reporting symptoms of MSDs to supervisor
- Awareness of safe work methods and techniques (i.e., stretch breaks, proper use of assistive devices/PPE) to minimize risk factors associated with MSDs

Specialized Training may be provided for managers, supervisors, and employees who work in identified high-risk jobs or departments (i.e. Police, Fire, Public Works, etc.).

#### **4.6 Medical Management**

Pursuant to the law, City of Reedley provides medical care to all employees injured at work. City of Reedley maintains a good working relationship with our medical care provider. All work-related injuries and illnesses will be referred to the City of Reedley's worker's compensation provider unless the injured employee has notified City of Reedley in writing that other provisions have been made prior to an injury or illness.

In the event of a work-related injury or illness, the medical care provider/professional will:

- Provide diagnosis and treatment for City of Reedley employees
- Determine if reported MSD signs or symptoms are work-related
- Comply with City of Reedley Early Return-to-Work program by recommending restricted, modified, or transitional work duties when appropriate
- Refer City of Reedley injured employees to other clinical resources for therapy or rehabilitation
- Provide City of Reedley with timely work status reports
- Develop a positive working relationship with City of Reedley workers' compensation carrier, Bickmore Risk Services

City of Reedley has an Early Return-to-Work program and will offer return-to-work opportunities to all injured employees in accordance with work restrictions identified by a recognized medical provider.