

Harmful to Health

Labor can be harmful to physical health when proper attention isn't given to how the work is designed and performed. Improper tools, limited mobility, and other factors can lead to workers missing time from work due to soreness, fatigue, and other health issues.

Workplace ergonomics is the practice of adapting the work to disorders (MSDs) and acute injuries. According to a 2022 report from the National Library of Medicine, MSDs were the primary contributing factor for nonfatal injuries in the U.S. construction industry.

When workers feel better physically, their performance tends to improve. A proactive workplace ergonomics strategy helps everyone: Employers get increased productivity, and employees get improved working conditions.

Here are a few ways construction employers can better utilize ergonomics to ensure a safer workforce.

1. Assess the Work Environment

Building an effective workplace ergonomics strategy starts by highlighting where improvements can be made. This includes investigating the environments and equipment that create the workplace. Companies can focus on the common tools and physical movements workers use to complete necessary tasks.

The selection of proper tools is a common way to improve ergonomics. For example, selecting hammers that offer lower

vibration or increased shock absorption can help reduce incidences of injuries. Selecting the proper tool size can also lead to fewer repetitive movements and less fatigue.

Nail guns are labor-saving devices, and they are also ergonomic devices because the worker does not have the repeated blows of using the hammer to drive the fastener. This reduces impact and grip issues associated with a prolonged, tightened grip like when using a hammer. Eliminating these static postures and movements can help prevent injuries.

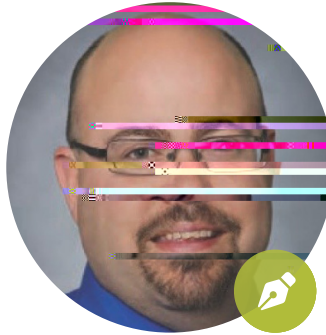
Workers who have a static posture or use the same motion repeatedly for eight hours or more a day can start to experience health issues related to limited range of movement. Every so often, workers need to do something that increases the range.

When reviewing the movements your workers use to complete tasks, consider how they're lifting equipment and materials. Lifting objects outside the power zone between the knees and

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There are ways to diversify a worker's role without compromising on productivity. Job rotation and other job-enlargement practices allow workers to perform different tasks that increase their range of motion. This creates a safer jobsite by disrupting routine work that can become monotonous. It also helps to prevent injuries associated with repeated motions, which can reduce absenteeism.

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