Ergonomics and Manual Handling Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. Manual material handling (MMH) is the most common cause of occupational fatigue and low back pain.
2. Back injuries account for about one third of all lost work and even more than one third of all compensation costs.
3. Each year several thousand workers are permanently disabled by back injuries. Many others are unable to return to their former jobs.
4. Manual handling injuries do not happen in isolation. Poor design of workplaces and activities can also contribute to both type and severity of injury.
5. Risk assessments determine the risk of manual handling injury and to help identify what remedial action is required. Medical and scientific knowledge stress the importance of an ergonomic approach to manual handling, taking into account the nature of the task, the load, the working environment and individual capability, and worker participation.

STATS

- According to the Health and Safety Executive approximately 120,000 people are injured at work from manual handling incidents each year.
- Over 30% of food and drink industry injuries reported to HSE are manual handling injuries such as back injuries, this represents around 1700 acute injuries per year.
- Manual handling injuries are caused by handling and lifting – 60% of the injuries involve lifting heavy objects.
- Overexertion and bodily reaction were the leading cause of lost-time occupational injuries, accounting for 36.6 % of all lost-time nonfatal cases, even more than slips, trips,

and falls (24.2 %).

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the back was the body part most frequently affected in 2012 private-sector injuries involving days away from work. Back injuries accounted for 19.6 % of those 905,690 injuries, significantly higher than hand (13.4 %), shoulder (7.5 %), knee (8.5 %), or head (5.0 %).