



Pallets Pose Hazards When Handled Improperly

Many organizations either ship or receive materials on pallets and skids. While this makes handling and moving material easier, pallets do pose hazards to those working around them. CCMSEI, a risk management service provider in Danville, IL, offers the following tips for safely working with pallets and skids.

- Inspect for splinters, loose nails and other defects. Set aside for repair or discard any unsafe skids or pallets. When skids or pallets are delivered from the manufacturer, spot check them to see that they meet specifications.
- Stack empty skids and pallets carefully so they are stable. Limit piles to 4 feet high. Stack them flat, never on end.
- Keep piles and individual units clear of aisles, doorways, switch boxes, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment.
- Use trucks or dollies to discard skids and pallets, especially if the load is to be moved any distance. Good planning is needed because of dangers from poor piling, nails, splinters and fire hazards.
- Don't drop units. This may cause damage, and the noise may also startle other employees working in the area.
- Wear personal protective equipment as necessary. Hand, foot and back injuries are most common when working with skids and pallets.
- Do not exceed floor capacity and crush strength when stacking. Allow for lower resistance when working with paperboard - it is more easily damaged than wood and may absorb moisture.
- Lift with caution. If done manually, two people should lift a skid or pallet in unison to distribute the weight and bulk.
- Avoid walking or stepping over skids and pallets.
- Where separate skid runners and platforms are used, stack platforms flat in a rack no more than 32 inches high.

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