

TOOL TYPE **HANDOUT**
GEOGRAPHY **ALL**

LAST REVIEWED **2/22/14**
SOURCE: **IHSA**

SAFETY HANDOUT ON SECURING LOADS

BENEFITS

Workplaces often use vehicles to transport loads of materials from site to site. If these materials, such as pipes or lumber, aren't properly secured, they can fall from the vehicle during transport and endanger everyone on the road. In addition, improperly secured loads can endanger workers when they go to unload the materials.

HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Adapt this safety handout for your OHS program and safe work procedures and the requirements in the OHS regulations in your jurisdiction. Give it to workers to supplement a toolbox talk on how to properly secure loads to vehicles.

OTHER RESOURCES:

[IHSA](#)

[Vehicle Inspection Checklist](#)

[Ergonomics Compliance Centre](#)

THIS TOOL AND HUNDREDS MORE AVAILABLE IN THE OHS TOOLBOX AT **www.ohsinsider.com**. Templates and tools from **OHS Insider** are provided for members of our service. Members may use this document as is or as a starting point to customize their own documents. **OHS Insider** assumes no responsibility for the effectiveness or legality of any of its online templates or tools. **Always consult your legal counsel and management before implementing any new policies or procedures.**

SAFETY HANDOUT ON SECURING LOADS

DANGERS

If a load isn't properly secured on your vehicle, it can severely injure you during loading and unloading.

Risk factors for workers when securing loads include:

- Overexertion injuries
- Being struck by parts of the load
- Slips and falls—either when working at heights or from the ground due to ice, snow and rain.

Here are two examples of actual workplace incidents involving improperly secured loads:

1. **Strapping loads** – A flatbed driver was strapping a load of steel from the side of a flat-bed truck. While pulling and turning the strap wheel, he felt a sudden pain in his right shoulder, a musculoskeletal injury that required therapy and days off work.
2. **Unstrapping loads** – A worker was killed by a falling pipe when unloading a transport trailer. He was unstrapping the load when three high-density polyethylene pipes, weighing about 500 kg each, rolled off the top tier. Although the pipes were resting on dunnage, it didn't secure the load once the strap was removed.

If a load isn't properly secured, it can also cause major problems during transportation. Studies have found that up to 25% of unsafe highway incidents were attributed to cargo inadequately secured on vehicles.

CONTROLS

There are many methods and materials available to secure loads and cargo on vehicles and intermodal containers, including:

- Strapping (steel, polyester, nylon, and polypropylene)
- Fasteners (nails and bolts)
- Dunnage
- Lashing (ropes, cables, wires, and chains).

To prevent injuries, follow proper work practices to secure loads:

- All loads must be secured to comply with [*insert appropriate laws, such as OHS and highway safety laws*].
- Workers should wear comfortable boots with anti-slip resistance.
- When placing straps over loads, tie a rope with a ball to the end of the strap. Make sure that no one is near the other side of the trailer. If someone is helping you on the other side, tell them to stand back. Then throw the ball over the load and pull the strap over on the other side.
- Use telescoping tools to help you pull straps down from the top of the load.
- Use a power strap winder or drill-attached strap winder to save your wrist from repetitive strain and forceful exertion.
- Consider installing geared or powered winches.
- Use a properly designed winch bar. When tightening or loosening winches, always maintain a firm grip on the winch bar. Never release a winch bar without checking the pawl to ensure that it's fully engaged between the ratchet teeth. Releasing a winch bar without the pawl being properly engaged can cause serious injury to the user or bystanders. Never use cheater bars with the winch bars.
- Loading and unloading may involve equipment such as forklifts or cranes. Drivers shouldn't operate such equipment unless they're competent to do so based on their training, experience and knowledge of the OHS laws.

THIS TOOL AND HUNDREDS MORE AVAILABLE IN THE OHS TOOLBOX AT www.ohsinsider.com. Templates and tools from **OHS Insider** are provided for members of our service. Members may use this document as is or as a starting point to customize their own documents. **OHS Insider** assumes no responsibility for the effectiveness or legality of any of its online templates or tools. **Always consult your legal counsel and management before implementing any new policies or procedures.**