

SAFETY ALERT

Incident Title:

Back Strain

Date of Incident:

November 2016

Incident Description and Details:

A worker was removing sand bags that had been used to help form a concrete pour around a storm water pipe and pit joint. The worker was in an excavation and was standing on sand with feet side by side. The worker had removed a number of bags already from one side of the pipe and then started on the other side of the pipe. As he lifted out the first (top) bag he twisted and the bag caught on concrete recently poured which hindered the movement of the bag, resulting in a lower back strain.

First aid officers attended the worker. An investigation was undertaken and the worker was taken to a medical facility.

**Recommendations/Lessons:**

- An investigation concluded that although the worker had received training for manual handling, it was one year prior and only as part of the site induction. The worker had used the incorrect manual handling technique, twisting and pulling with feet side by side.
- The Contractor will ensure project personnel receive manual handling training and manual handling is discussed during pre-starts.

A REMINDER TO ALL STAFF

- Increased weight equals increased risk and the risk is not just about weight. Often the risk is due to a combination of the weight and your posture, such as bending forward, and movements such as holding the load away from the body or twisting, as well as the shape or configuration of the load. Always look at the task and assess the risk.