



Overexertion Injuries in Residential Framing Construction

In Residential Framing Construction, nearly 1300 serious overexertion injuries occurred from 2000 to 2004, resulting in over 46,000 lost work days.



These injuries were so serious, workers had to take time off work to recover or in some cases could not return to work or were permanently disabled. From 2000-2004, overexertion claims in Residential Building Construction totaled 35% of all claims and resulted in 41% of lost work days. The average base rate of \$2.80 per hour per employee paid by residential construction employers in 2006. If your business has a higher than average number of injuries (claims), your “experience rating” could increase by as much as 25% in one year to \$3.50 per hour per employee.

Stated another way, if you had 10 full-time employees and had an average number of claims, you would pay about \$56,000 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay about \$14,000 more or \$70,000 in premiums in 2007.

Causes or sources of injury

Overexertion injuries are caused by tearing or stretching of tendons, ligaments or muscles when loads if lifted, carried, pushed, pulled or otherwise handled, exceed the limits of the joint system doing the work. In residential construction the most common source of overexertion injuries are handling wallboard and lumber in these ways:

- Lifting
- Repeated bending at the waist
- Repeated bending at the waist with twisting
- Long term bending at the waist
- Carrying
- Reaching
- Long term poor posture, sitting or standing
- Sitting while absorbing vibration through the body (as in truck or lift truck driving)



Solutions to prevent injuries

Use mechanical assists when possible:

- Hand trucks
- Drywall lifts
- Fork Trucks
- Carts



If no mechanical assists are available, team-carry materials



Stack lumber in a way that will promote lifting from above the knees and below the shoulders.



Ensure good house keeping of building materials in order to maintain clear pathways for building products from truck to building.

