

Analysis

Department stores make up the majority of the stores in this industry. These stores carry men and women's apparel and either major household appliances or other home furnishings. The stores usually provide their own charge accounts, deliver merchandise and maintain open stocks. They are normally arranged in separate sections or departments and have 50 or more employees. Stores doing similar things but which have less than 50 employees are classified as miscellaneous general merchandise stores. The remainders of the stores in this category are variety stores.

Back injuries from overexertion, lifting objects are a major problem for workers in this industry. 70 of the 254 claims were of this type with a corresponding number of 61 back injuries. There were 57 falls, both on the same level and from elevation. The category of being struck by or against objects is also an area of concern. Other than the back, body parts most involved were knees, wrists, multiple, upper extremities, the trunk, legs and feet. Although not industry-specific, it is important to note that Truck Drivers were number two on the List of Occupations with the Twenty Highest Newly Reported Indemnity Claims in New Mexico for 2001 with 278 claims. Driver-Sales Workers, Cashiers and Freight, Stock and Material Handlers also appear on this list. Young workers/new employees also need attention and assistance with accident prevention.

This checklist is intended to enhance knowledge and assist in preventing injuries throughout this industry group. The common nature of the work and the corresponding accident experience can lead to coordinated efforts to overcome problem areas. Please use the information to direct attention to your specific areas of concern.

53/General Merchandise Stores

YES / NO / N/A

Back Injury Prevention

*Employees are made aware of the dangers of lifting
Employees ask for help from others to lift heavy
Objects*

*Through training, employees know how to lift
Management has minimized lifting tasks by providing
Lifting equipment and mechanical devices*

*Repetitive motion injuries are prevented by stretch
Breaks and exercises*

Loading docks are visible and well maintained

*New employees are given special attention and
Supervision to ensure that lifting is done properly*

*If used, back support belts are worn properly and
Are used only for lifting*

Fall Prevention

All walkways are clearly marked and illuminated

Floors are kept clean and dry

Mats are used during wet weather

Employee footwear is adequate for the job

*Tripping hazards are identified, highlighted and
Eliminated*

Spills are cleaned up immediately

Floor cones are used as necessary

Housekeeping is effective

All stairs have handrails on both sides

*Parking areas are well illuminated and walking
Surfaces are free of hazards*

Employees know how to report hazards

Maintenance personnel continually evaluate

All walking/working surfaces

Running is prohibited

Fall Protection

YES / NO / N/A

*At elevations above six feet, employees are
Protected by guardrails, safety net systems
Or personal fall arrest systems
Employees use appropriate footwear for the
Walking/working surface
All ladders, locking stepladders and stools are
Checked for condition prior to use
Defective equipment is disposed of
Trained employees use the equipment properly
Special precautions are used during wet or icy
Conditions*

Struck by or Against Objects are types of indemnity
Claims that are the second leading cause of death
At work in New Mexico. The industry had 36 of these
Claims in 2001 from moving, stationary, falling/
Flying objects and striking against objects.

Bodily Reaction is a type of indemnity claim which
Refers to body motions that cause physical
Stress or strain. An example is a shoulder strain
Injury resulting from an overextended reach. There
Were 20 of these accidents in 2001.

*Situational awareness and knowledge of our
Individual limitations are the key elements in
Preventing these injuries*

Personal Protective Equipment

YES / NO /N/A

Protective equipment has been issued and is used

By trained employees as needed. Examples

Include the following:

Hard hats/bump caps

Protective glasses

Face shields

Respirators

Wire-mesh gloves for any slicer work

Steel-toed work shoes or boots

Slip-resistant footwear

Personal fall arrest systems

Protective clothing, gloves and aprons

First-aid kits

Fire extinguishers

Hearing protection

Communications capabilities

Other equipment, which may be required

To perform specific tasks

Fire Safety

All exits are unobstructed and lighted

Exit lights are lit

Fire extinguishers are provided and employees

Are trained in their use

Fire extinguisher inspections are up-to-date

Fire evacuation routes are posted

Emergency procedures are posted

Fire drills are conducted

Stairwells are completely free of storage

Emergency telephone numbers are posted

Flammable materials are stored

Separately and properly using approved

Containers or cabinets

Sprinkler heads are unobstructed

Electrical Equipment

YES / NO / N/A

*All switches, cover plates and outlets are
In good condition
Electrical panels are locked and accessible
All equipment is grounded
Extension cords are not used
Nothing is stored in electrical equipment
Rooms
Lockout/tag out procedures are used by
Employees and service/repair personnel*

Elevators

*Car levels evenly at landings
Passengers are clear of entrances
Before doors close
The elevator will not move until the
Doors are completely closed
The telephones and alarms are
Operable
The certificate of inspection is posted
In the elevator or is on file*

Escalators

*Emergency shutoff buttons are installed
At the top and bottom of each escalator
On the right side facing the stairs
Sidewalls are made of low-friction material
So that soft-soled shoes cannot be caught
Devices which sense the presence of a
Foreign object and automatically stop
The escalator are installed and are
Operational
Side clearances at the edges of steps are
No more than 3/16 of an inch
Warning signs are placed to remind parents
To hold children's hands and face forward
Each step has brightly colored borders*

Hazardous Materials

YES / NO / N/A

Chemicals are stored properly
Chemical containers are clearly labeled
Chemical spill control supplies are readily Available
The list of all chemicals is available
Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are Accessible to employees who need them
Trained employees can understand MSDS
Pesticides are carefully chosen and used to ensure The lowest possible toxicity and risk for Unwanted exposure
Personal protective equipment is used
Fire extinguishers are available
Eye wash stations are accessible
Contaminated clothing is properly cleaned or Disposed of promptly
Hazardous material signs are posted as required

Shop Areas

Tools are in good condition
All electrical equipment is grounded
All machine guards are in place
Fire extinguishers are accessible
Flammables are properly contained
First aid kits and PPE are accessible
Spray painting booth has explosion-Proof fixtures and is well ventilated
Smoking is prohibited

Shipping/Receiving Areas

Where mechanical handling equipment is used, Clearances are adequate for aisles, at loading Docks, through doorways and where turns Must be made

*Aisles and passageways are clear, unobstructed
And marked as required*

YES / NO / N/A

*Loading docks are visible, well maintained and
Well illuminated*

Storage does not present a hazard

*All bags and containers stored in tiers are stacked,
Blocked, interlocked and limited in height so
That they are stable and secure*

Clearance limits signs are posted and visible

*Where necessary, guards, covers and railings
Are provided*

*Where necessary, emergency lighting has been
Installed and is tested periodically*

*If used, forklifts meet all standards and operators
Are trained and certified*

Appropriate PPE is in use

First-aid kits are accessible

*Fire extinguishers are accessible and employees
Are trained in their use*

*If used, back support belts are worn properly and
Are used only for lifting*

Housekeeping is excellent

Compressed Gases

Storage areas are well ventilated, fireproof and dry

Cylinders are clearly labeled

*Cylinders (both full and empty) are secured and
Separated by type*

The valve protection cap is not removed until

The cylinder is secure and ready for use

Empty cylinders are never stored with or near

Full ones

Flammable and nonflammable gases are stored

Separately and properly

Smoking is prohibited

Employees are trained and knowledgeable

Restrooms

YES / NO / N/A

Soap dispensers, paper and hot and cold

Running water is available

All hardware items are in good condition

There are no broken mirrors

Lighting is adequate

Housekeeping and sanitation are excellent

Non-slip surfaces are clean and dry

Clean towels or warm air blowers are adequate

Appropriate receptacles are provided

Power and Hand Tools

Only the proper tools are used for the job

Guards and safety devices are operable and in place

Pinch and shear points are guarded

Employees are trained and knowledgeable

All power tools are grounded

No tool is stored in an overhead location

Box cutters are used and disposed of properly

All tools are inspected frequently and are well

Maintained

Employees use appropriate PPE for the job

Welding and Cutting

Operators are trained and well qualified

Cylinders are secured

Fire extinguishers are nearby

All fittings are free of oil and grease

Specified gauge settings are maintained

All hoses and cords are in good condition

Designated areas are used for the work

Personal protective equipment is in use

Smoking is prohibited

Motor Vehicle Accident Prevention

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death at work in New Mexico. Motor vehicle accidents tend to result in more serious injuries than other types of accidents – almost 30 percent of all compensable fatalities are of this type.

Causes

*Failure to wear seat belts
Lack of attention while driving
Excessive speed
Violations of state law and company policy
Driving under the influence
Failure to drive with regard to road conditions*

Ideas for Employers

*Develop a company policy that covers driving while at work.
Consider including the following:
The use of seat belts in company vehicles is mandatory
Only specifically authorized employees with valid and company
Verified licenses may operate company vehicles or
Personally owned vehicles on company business
Prohibit alcohol and drug use in company vehicles
Offer Defensive Driving courses to employees
Develop a vehicle safety inspection and maintenance program
Establish a safety awards program to recognize good drivers*

Ideas for Employees

*Wear seat belts and ensure your passengers do the same
Never drink and drive
Obey all traffic laws
Inspect your vehicle before driving and report defects to a
Supervisor
Do not drive the vehicle if safety problems are not corrected
Be alert to changing road conditions and drive defensively*

Employee Security at Work

Workplace violence is violence or the threat of violence against workers. It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide, one of the leading causes of job-related deaths.

No one is immune from the danger presented by violence. It can strike anyone at anytime. Workers are exposed to increased risk due to the nature of the jobs involved, the occupational settings and visibility. Awareness is the key to prevention.

Ideas for Employers

Establish a workplace violence prevention program or include it in the existing safety program

Make it clear that violence will not be tolerated and that any incidents will be investigated and promptly remedied

Provide safety education for employees so that they know what to do if they witness or are subjected to violence, and how to protect themselves

Wherever possible, secure the workplace. Make it a hard target.

Consider electronic and video surveillance, extra lighting, alarm systems and minimize access through use of photo ID cards and electronic keys

Post the workers' compensation Employee Security at Work Poster

Ideas for Employees

Be aware of your environment at all times. Never enter any location where you feel unsafe. Ask to be escorted in potentially dangerous situations or at night

Learn as much as you can to recognize, avoid or diffuse violent conditions

Alert supervisors to hazards or concerns regarding your safety

Avoid traveling alone into unfamiliar locations or situations whenever possible

Always trust yourself – if it doesn't feel safe, it probably isn't

Young Workers/New Employees

In 2001, workers in their first year of employment filed a large share of the indemnity claims with 46.9 percent of the total in New Mexico. Each year this statistic hovers around 50 percent. What follows is information specifically designed to address the needs of these workers.

Five Steps For A Safer Workplace

Start your workers out right

- *Welcome them*
- *Orient them*
- *Introduce them*
- *Train them*
- *Check them out on tools and equipment*
- *Observe and assist them*

Account for all accidents

- *Keep records of NOAs, E-1s, E-6s and OSHA logs*
- *Cost out the loss to the organization*
- *Assist supervisors with accountability*
- *Evaluate safety performance*

Managers plan safety

- *Plan safety into each job*
- *Use job planning/hazard analysis tools*
- *Make sure the workers know what to do*

Hold safety meetings

- *Choose specific topics (fall prevention)*
- *Use examples (Jane hurt her back when...)*
- *Keep it brief*

Reinforce safety performance/recognize good work

Administration

YES / NO /N/A

The Workers' Compensation Act Poster

*Is available, has been filled in with the name
Of the insurance company/claims representative
As required and the Notice of Accident Forms
Accompany the poster*

The organization's Annual Safety Inspection

*Has been done and is documented
OSHA posters and logs are available
Department of Labor information is available*

Organization Information

Inspector Information and Date

Internet Resources

International Association of Department Stores

<http://www.iads.org/>

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh>

New Mexico Occupational Health and Safety Bureau (OSHA)

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/ohsb>

Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union

<http://www.rwdsu.com/>

American Society of Safety Engineers, NM Chapter

<http://www.asse.org/>

