# **Safe Sandbagging - SAFE WORK procedure**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the safety of those who are involved with filling and moving sandbags. If proper lifting techniques are not followed, there is potential for injuries such as back strain due to the load put on the spine.

**SCOPE & APPLICABILITY**

This procedure covers important safety considerations related to sandbagging and apply to all staff/workers who engage in this activity.

**PREREQUISITES**

You must review this procedure and associated procedure before conducting any sandbagging work.

**REFERENCE SOURCES:**

* Sample City Safety Management System
* WorkSafeBC Regulations
  + 4.46 to 4.53 Ergonomics (MSI) Requirements
  + Part 8 Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment
* Sample City Safe Sandbagging Risk Assessment

**PPE REQUIRED:**

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| * CSA approved work boots | * Safety glasses | * High-visibility apparel (if working near/adjacent to roadway) |
| * Gloves |  |  |
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**TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:**

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| * Sand | * Shovel | * Sandbags |

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| **Safe Work Procedure – Filling Sandbags** | |
| **Responsibility** | **Activity** |
| **Workers** | * Ensure you have a partner to work with. One person will hold the bag while the other shovels it full. |
| **Worker** | * The person holding the bag should stand with feet shoulder-width apart and knees bent. Use of safety glasses and gloves are recommended. |
| **Worker** | * When shoveling, the worker should follow the following guidelines:   + Put weight on front foot and dig shovel into sand to fill.   + Shift weight to rear foot. Keep load close to body.   + Turn feet instead of twisting. Release load into bag.   + Fill bag until it’s approximately 1/3 to ½ full.   + Tie bag at top and allow fill to conform to shape.   + Bags should weigh between 35 and 45 pounds |
| **Workers** | * Alternate between tasks every 15 to 20 minutes (helper versus person shoveling) to allow muscle groups to rest, reduce fatigue and help prevent musculoskeletal injuries. |

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| **Safe Work Procedure – Lifting/Lowering Technique** | |
| **Responsibility** | **Activity** |
| **Worker** | * Sandbags are heavy – use appropriate lifting and lowering techniques to put them into place.   + Feet should be shoulder-width apart and staggered so one foot is in front of the other. Place the back foot behind the bag to be lifted.   + Bend the knees. Do not bend over at the waist as this unnecessary stress on the back/spine.   + Keep the back straight and chin tucked in.   + Grip one hand around the neck of the bag. Place the other hand under the bag.   + Stand up using leg muscles.   + Keep your arms and elbows close to the body.   + When lowering the bag, bend the knees, not your back. |
| **Worker** | * When carrying a sandbag, keep the bag close to the body. * Do not twist the back. To change direction, shift foot direction and turn the whole body. |
| **Worker** | * Report any instances of incident/injury to your immediate supervisor. |

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| **Written by:** |  | **Title:** |  | **Dept.** |  |