

Pushcart safety

Hazards include overexertion, sprains, strains, struck by, caught in or between, slips, trips, and falls.

Push or pull

Whenever possible push a cart rather than pulling it.

- When pulling a cart, a worker is more likely to run over their feet
- While pulling and walking backward, a worker is more likely to slip, trip, or fall. If pulling while walking forward, a worker's arm will be stretched behind their body, increasing the risk of back and shoulder injuries due to overexertion or bodily reaction

Controlling environmental factors

Aisles

- Should be wide enough for the operator's body to safely stand behind the cart and apply the force necessary to move it
- Keep aisles clear of clutter, spills, and debris
- Corners should accommodate the turning radius of the moving cart without stopping and starting. Heavier loaded carts will have more trouble in corners and tight aisles

Ramps

- More force is required to ascend ramps as well as to slow down and control a cart while descending a ramp
- Reduce load weight when utilizing ramps to allow for greater control with less exertion
- If heavily loaded carts and multiple ramps cannot be avoided, use a power assist (battery powered pushing device) and hand brakes

Floors

- Damaged, uneven, and rough floor surfaces create hazards that can catch the cart's wheels
- Dusty, oily, and wet floors reduce the ability of the operator to control carts and maintain traction. Without the traction needed, a worker will have to exert excessive force to move or control a cart and may slip, trip, or lose control
- If floors are uneven, consider using powered carts

Equipment

- Choose equipment that will suit or can be adjusted to suit as many individuals as possible
- Wear appropriate footwear for the flooring. Soles that slip will increase the effort needed to move the cart and the likelihood of a slip/trip/fall incident

Operators

- Should be trained on appropriate body positioning for the type of cart being handled
- Should be trained on how to maneuver heavy loads and to avoid heavy loading when possible
- Should walk at appropriate speeds (typical walking pace)
- Should push rather than pull carts whenever possible. Tasks should be designed to accommodate this

Site specific requirements:

Employee participants:

Date:
