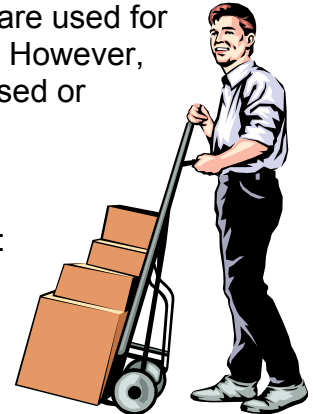


CART AND HAND TRUCK SAFETY

(For assistance, please contact EHS at (402) 472-4925, or visit our web site at <http://ehs.unl.edu/>)

Manual material handling equipment, such as carts and hand trucks, are used for a variety of hauling operations and can make these operations safer. However, this equipment can present serious safety issues if it is not properly used or maintained.



General Precautions

- Operators should be aware of and minimize the following hazards:
 - Running the truck's wheels off of bridge/dock plates, dock platforms, uneven surfaces, or inclines.
 - Colliding with other trucks or obstructions. Secure the load and close containers to prevent losing control of the load while moving.
 - Jamming of the operator's hands between the truck and other objects.
 - Running the truck's wheels over the operator's feet.
- Obtain carts that roll and maneuver easily with wheels that can be locked. On four-wheeled carts, those equipped with one set of articulating wheels are easier to maneuver than carts that are equipped with all stationary wheels.
- Carts with ball-bearings and pneumatic wheels are far superior to lower-quality carts with plastic wheels, especially when moving heavy loads.
- Select carts and trucks with hard wheels for use on soft floor surfaces and soft wheels for use on hard floor surfaces.
- Carts for transporting chemicals should have rails to prevent chemicals from falling off the cart.
- Hand trucks for compressed gas cylinders should have means to secure the cylinder to the truck.
- Inspect carts routinely and do not use them if they are not in good repair. Take action to have them fixed immediately.
- Take care when using carts. Maintain adequate visibility. Pay attention to the path of travel and do not move too fast.
- Ensure that the load is not wider than the cart, especially when traveling in narrow halls and doorways. Do not forget the stationery mullion in double doorways.
- Do not try to navigate carts on stairs or steep inclines.
- Use a freight elevator rather than a passenger elevator when possible.

- When not in use, trucks and carts should be parked in a designated area, not in aisles or other places where they cause trip hazards, block traffic, breaker boxes, fire extinguishers and pull stations, eyewash stations, or other safety equipment.
- Trucks with drawbar handles should be parked with handles up and out of the way. Two-wheeled trucks should be stored upright with handles leaning against a wall.

Two-Wheeled Manual Hand Trucks

- Keep the load's center of gravity as low as possible. Place heavy objects below lighter objects.
- Balance the load so the weight will be carried by the axle, not the handles.
- Position the load so it will not slip, shift, or fall; and use straps, chain, or rope to secure load, if necessary.
- Load only to a height that will allow a clear view ahead.
- Let the truck carry the load. The operator should only balance and push.
- Never walk backwards with a hand truck.
- When going up or down a slight incline, keep the truck in front of you. Do not operate the truck on steep inclines.
- Move the truck at a safe walking pace. Do not run.
- Specific purpose trucks should be used only for that purpose. A curved bed truck should be used for handling cylinders, drums or other circular materials.

Four-Wheeled Hand Trucks and Carts

- Safe operating precautions are similar to two-wheel trucks.
- Place loads evenly to prevent tipping.
- Arrange the cart contents so they will not fall or sustain damage if the truck or load is bumped.
- Carts should be pushed rather than pulled except for those with a fifth wheel and a handle for pulling.
- If the load is higher than the operator can safely look over, use two people. One should guide the front end and one the back end. Handles should be placed at protected places to avoid smashing or scraping the operator's hands.