

Wolff Bros. Supply, Inc., Medina

Intervention Key Words: Hand Truck, Plastic Pallet, Automatic Mailer

Industrial Key Words: Other: Warehouse, Distribution

Risk Factor(s): Repetitive motion, Awkward Posture- Back deviations, Shoulder deviations, Manual Handling- Lifting/Carrying, Pushing/Pulling

Situation:

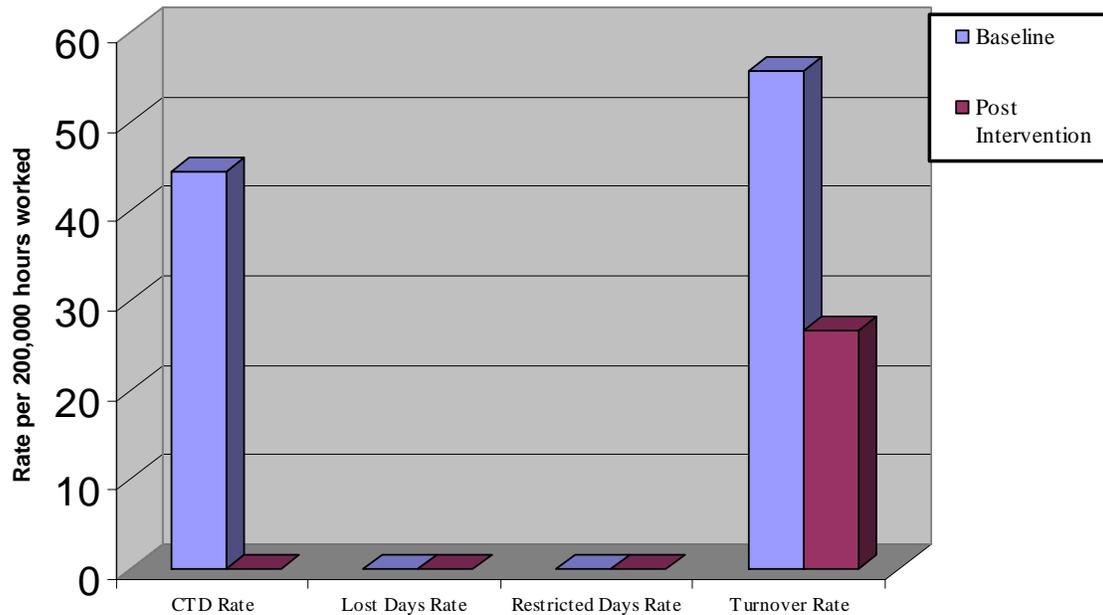
Wolff Brothers Supply Inc., is a wholesale distributor of products ranging from cabinets to HVAC components. Products arrive at the warehouse on pallets and are stored on shelving units until they are shipped to customers. Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTDs) in warehouse workers is a growing problem and one such example of CTD risks can be observed in the Wolff Bros. store rooms. Workers who unload arriving pallets must lift boxes weighing up to 65 lbs. to shelves as high as 68". The pallets are placed on the floor, creating bending risks as well as repetition, heavy lifting and awkward posture concerns. Employees in the Accounting Department also face CTD risks. Here, an average of 1400 invoices are processed daily. The forms must be folded twice and stuffed into envelopes, creating CTD risks for various upper extremity injuries, especially carpal tunnel syndrome.

Solution:

Wolff Bros. purchased a high lift hand truck to help alleviate their CTD risks. The new truck can not only transfer the pallet to the appropriate area of the warehouse but will also rise to the appropriate level to assist the workers in unloading the pallets. In order for the new equipment to work properly, Wolff Bros. also had to purchase a number of specially designed plastic pallets. An automatic mail folder/inserter was also purchased for the Accounting Department. This saves them time and decreases CTD risks. Total cost for the intervention was \$36,024. Wolff Bros. Supply received \$27,077 in assistance from SafetyGrant\$ to offset their costs.



Results:



- CTD rate (standardized per 200,000 hours worked) decreased 100% in the 2 years following the intervention from a level of 44.5 the year prior.
- Employee Turnover rate decreased from 55.6 to 26.6 in the same time period, a 52% improvement.
- Both Lost Days and Restricted Days rates were at 0 for the year prior to the intervention and remained at 0 for 24 months following.
- CTD Risk Factor scores, averaged over two tasks, decreased 42% following the intervention.