SHOVELING

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is a task that can lead to awkward and uncomfortable body positions. Proper techniques are essential to protecting your body from injury. Start by making sure you have the right PPE. Depending on the nature of the work, this may include gloves, footwear, and eye protection. Next pick the right type of shovel for the job. Shovels used for snow are very different those used for dirt. Round blades with long handles are better for sand and dry earth. Square blades with short handles are designed for coarse–grained materials such as gravel. A wide rectangle blade is good for pushing snow. No matter what you are shoveling, consider warming up or doing a few exercises before you begin.

Keep the feet staggered and elbows close to the body!

SHOVELING BEST PRACTICES FOR THE BODY:

- Step close to the load with one foot in front of the other. Keeping the feet staggered helps to maintain balance.
- Knees should be flexed with elbows close to the body. Reaching out and away from the body can increase stress on the body and make the job harder.
- Avoid twisting the back, knees, and neck. Keep the feet and shoulders pointed in the same direction. Move your feet in the direction you are throwing the load.
- Try alternating using the shovel with the right and left hand. This allows you to use different muscles and keeps one side of the body from becoming overly fatigued.
- Plowing or pushing snow can be a better way to clear a large area in moderate snow depths. Use a snow shovel and hold the end of it close to one hip. Move with the shovel as you push it, do not reach away from the body.

Select the right shovel for the job!

WHAT TO DO!

- Tell your supervisor if you need a different type of shovel, or if the one you are using is not in working condition.
- Warm-up, take breaks and stay well hydrated.
- Dress for the weather conditions.
- Report any injuries to your supervisor immediately!
- In an emergency, call 911 and UOPD (541-346-2919) for immediate assistance!

Don't twist the back, knees or neck when throwing the load. Step in the direction of the throw!

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*Does not act in place of official training. Contact EHS.

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