

LE TAG



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Smile ... Spring is
almost here !!!

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WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hi everyone!

I take this opportunity, right from the start, to wish you a Happy New Year 2014. First and foremost, good health and work! This winter is possibly one of the harshest in ten years. This has hindered our productivity on various ongoing job sites.

As you well know, competition has been fierce in the recent months and we must multiply our efforts in all departments to maintain our market shares.

The company is currently in a continuous improvement program. All department managers are seeking new ways to be more efficient at all levels.

Obviously, we need everyone to put forth cooperative efforts in order to keep ahead of the competition.

I repeat again, we can observe that the various quality control measures put in place last year are paying off more and more.

Let's keep going!

Éric Bernier, President

Good news!

Here are some of the new projects recently obtained by ABF:

- Bates condos / Montreal (QC)
- MTQ #8603-13-1105 Road 137 / St-Hyacinthe (QC)
- HQ #14372514 Bedford & St-Césaire substations (QC)
- Laurentian University School of Architecture Phase 2 / Sudbury (ON)
- SIQ Wilder building Lot 3.2 Rebar / Montreal (QC)
- Lafèche Russell Waste Transfer Facility / Russell (ON)

Physical activity to counter depression!

Although the link had already been made for several years between physical activity and improvement in the condition of depressed people, researchers just advanced one more step in establishing the frequency and type of exercise that are beneficial for these people. A study done by researchers shows that, alone or in combination with appropriate medication, physical activity speeds up return to normal life for people battling with depression.

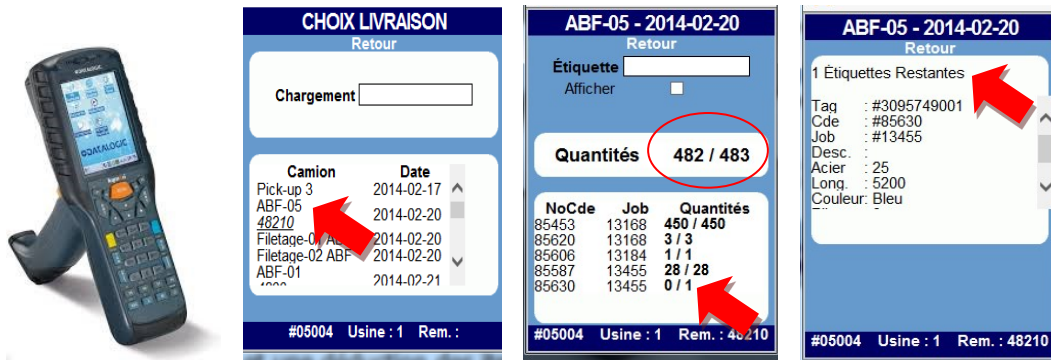
Aerobic activity is preferable, but exercises to build the muscular mass can also be beneficial. The ideal scenario would be exercise sessions of 45 – 60 min, 3 – 5 times a week, for at least 4 months.

Interesting point : we could have believed that depressed people would not be motivated to do physical activity. However, in the groups being subject to research, no more than 15% abandoned their program, which is normal in this type of research.

Good to know...

WORD FROM OUR QUALITY COORDINATOR

Did you know that ABF has decided to invest in an integrated system of management and manufacturing control? Since 2012, the WINPUNCH system is being gradually implemented in our plant. The first phase was implemented in the loading department for steel shipments. In the past, all shipments were loaded using bills of lading. The workers marking the vans had to put a line across each item of the bill manually, indicating that the item had been loaded on the van. Now, all items to be loaded on the vans must be scanned and a deduction of the remaining items is done automatically in the scanner.



This way, we ensure that all tags issued for a shipment have been loaded on the trailer. Each time a shipment leaves the plant, a report including the detail of all the tags per job, per bill of lading, for a specific truck is generated. This is why it is now possible to track down each bundle produced.



In the 2nd phase of implementation, we addressed the production. Each of the tags that have been issued during a shipment must be scanned at each step of the production. All production machines are now equipped with LBC terminals. They are programmed with all the possible configurations for production. According to the recipe, the system knows that a bended bar will require to go through two steps: one for cutting and one for bending. So the tag must be scanned by a cutting equipment and by a bending equipment (or by a MEP which cuts and bends in one operation). The LBC terminals are specific to each step of the production. It is now possible to know exactly where a piece of rebar was produced, on which machine, in which building, by which operator, making it easier to investigate when production mistakes occur and pinpoint the source of the problem. We can then give proper training to individuals, when required.

We now control what we manufacture and what we ship. We are now looking into getting a better control on what we are unloading. This will be the 3rd phase of implementation. How can we ensure that the bundles are unloaded at the right place? In the coming weeks, we will work with the people involved to see how we can achieve that goal. ABF drivers as well as other drivers, foremen and superintendents will be asked to contribute to help with this phase of implementation. They are the best people to tell us where there could be constraints and obstacles in regards with a certain project. With them, we will be able to put in place solutions that will really work for the 3rd phase of project WINPUNCH.

Véronique Bélanger,
Quality Coordinator



DELOITTE TOWER PROJECT

Here are some pictures of Deloitte Tower project that is currently achieving.
An complete article will follow on next issue of 'Le Tag'.



Miscellaneous

Statutory Holidays to come

Friday, April 18, 2014 (Good Friday)

Monday, April 21, 2014 (Easter Monday)

Monday, May 19, 2014 (Victoria Day)

ABF babies



Congratulations to Nadia Gauthier and her spouse for the birth of their little Travis. He was born on January 28th, 2014 and weighed 6 lbs 12 ounces.



Welcome to all new employees in the ABF team.

PCL safety award presented to one of ours!

On January 14, 2014, our foreman Pat Chenard was presented with the PCL Safety Award on his jobsite. He was nominated among candidates from all the construction sites that PCL has throughout Canada. He was given the Safety Award for the month of January because he excelled in the safety of his workers, and by participating in site safety activities with PCL. Congratulations!

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) refers to injuries or pain involving mostly the back and neck, as well as the lower and upper limbs. MSD affects tendons, muscles, ligaments and sometimes the nerves and tissues surrounding the joints. The quality of life of those with MSD is considerably diminished. Employers also sustain the effects of MSD in terms of economic loss and management issues.

What is MSD?

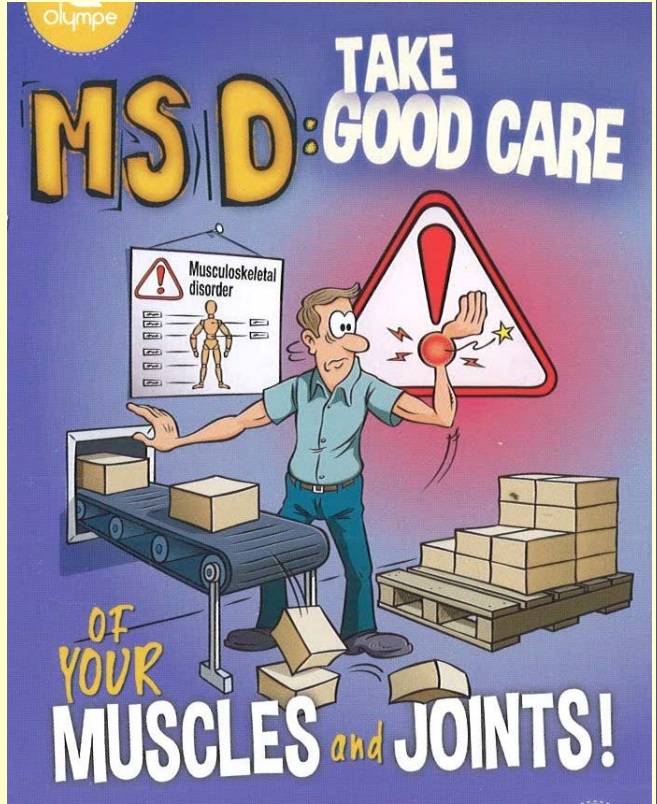
Musculoskeletal disorder is a chronic injury. What causes MSD? Repetition of movement, using excessive force, constrained body positions, in addition to insufficient rest; caused either by a lack of sleep, work breaks that are too short or inadequate recovery time. MSD develops progressively. The following symptoms are associated to each stage:

Stage 1:

- ◆ Pain, fatigue related to specific efforts, but always felt within working hours.
- ◆ The condition may last for several weeks and is reversible.
- ◆ The impact on day to day behavior varies from low to nil.

Stage 2:

- ◆ Symptoms appear quickly during work hours and persist into the evening.
- ◆ The condition may last for months and is reversible with extended rest.
- ◆ May cause functional impairment.



Stage 3:

- ◆ Symptoms persist even when at rest.
- ◆ Pain is felt when performing non-repeated movement and affects activities.
- ◆ The condition can last for months and years and is sometimes irreversible.

Act and prevent

MSD can be prevented. First, one must identify the possible risk factors. This includes immediate risk factors such as repetition and constraining body positions, as well as aggravating factors such as vibration, temperature and psychosocial contributors (stress, monotony, workload, etc.).

Once risk factors are identified, measures may involve implementing the principals of ergonomics. In such an event, one could make modifications to the work environment on these three greater fronts: equipment, methods and organization.

Conclusion

The conditions that bring on MSD can be hard to recognize. The pain sets in gradually, without drawing much of our attention at first and eventually reaches a level that seriously inhibits work performance and quality of life in general. Pay attention to early symptoms of MSD!

Alain Perron, Health and Safety Manager

True or False

| | True | False |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. We can prevent MSD by identifying risk factors. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. There are four stages of development for MSD | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. The pain associated to MSD hits suddenly... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. In no way does MSD affect employers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. MSD-related pain is only felt at work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Psychosocial contributors, such as monotony and workload, can aggravate musculoskeletal disorder..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. MSD only affects the muscles..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Changes made to one's work methods help reduce the risk factors leading to MSD..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

1. True : Identifying the risk factors allows to act, and prevent MSD.
 2. False : MSD has three stages of development.
 3. False : MSD develops gradually.
 4. False : Employers sustain economic loss and management issues.
 5. False : The pain can last into the evening, and affect day to day life.
 6. True : Psychosocial contributors, such as monotony and workload, are aggravating factors.
 7. False : MSD affects many other parts of the body.
 8. True : These changes can help to implement the principles of ergonomics.