

Stacking materials can be dangerous if workers do not follow safety guidelines. Falling materials and collapsing loads can crush or pin workers, causing injury or even death.

Other hazards include:

- Back injuries due to improper lifting techniques
- Struck-by material or equipment hazards
- Caught-in or pinch point injuries
- Damage to racking systems and inventory
- Injuries due to incorrectly cutting ties



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Stack **drums, barrels, and kegs** symmetrically.

- Place planks, sheets of plywood dunnage, or pallets between each tier of drums, barrels, and kegs to make a firm, flat, stacking surface when stacking on end.
- When stacking two or more tiers high, chock the bottom tier of drums, barrels, and kegs on each side to prevent shifting in either direction.
- If stored on their sides, block the bottom tiers of drums, barrels, and kegs to keep them from rolling.

All **lumber** should be stacked in such a way that is stable and self-supporting.

- Remove all nails from used lumber before stacking.
- Stack and level lumber on solidly supported bracing.
- Stack lumber no more than 16 feet high if it is handled manually, and no more than 20 feet if using a forklift.

Band **boxed materials** or secure them with cross-ties or shrink wrap.

- Interlocking boxes will create a more stable stack.
- For stability, boxes can be placed on a pallet which will also make them easier to move.

Stack **bags and bundles** in interlocking rows to keep them secure.

- Stack bagged material by stepping back the layers and cross-keying the bags at least every ten layers. Then, to remove bags from the stack, start from the top row first.

Do not store **pipes and bars** in racks that face main aisles to avoid creating a hazard to passersby when removing supplies.

- Unless they are in racks, stack and block poles, structural steel, pipe, bar stock and other cylindrical materials to prevent spreading or tilting.

When stacking, consider the height restrictions, clearance limits, maximum safe load limits as well as the need for availability of the material. Stacked materials and storage areas must not create a hazard for workers.

- Material should never block access to emergency exits, fire alarms, or fire extinguishers.
- Whether stacking manually, or by forklift, allow sufficient clearance around materials for easy access and safe handling.

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