Safe Materials Storage – Landscaping Stats and Facts



FACTS

Key hazards related to safe materials storage in the landscaping industry:

1. **Improper Stacking and Stability:** Materials that are not stacked properly can shift or collapse, leading to injuries from falling objects.
2. **Chemical Storage Issues:** Improper storage of chemicals such as pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides can lead to spills, leaks, and the release of toxic fumes.
3. **Fire Hazards:** Storing flammable materials like gasoline, oils, or dry organic matter (e.g., mulch) inappropriately can increase the risk of fire. These materials should be stored in designated, fire-resistant areas with appropriate fire suppression measures in place.
4. **Ergonomic Hazards:** Poorly organized storage areas can lead to ergonomic injuries, such as strains or sprains, when workers have to lift heavy materials from awkward positions or heights.
5. **Exposure to Hazardous Substances:** Inadequate labeling or mixing of stored materials can lead to accidental exposure to hazardous substances.
6. **Tripping and Slipping Hazards:** Poor storage practices, such as leaving materials in walkways or not cleaning up spills promptly, can create tripping and slipping hazards.
7. **Pest Infestation:** Improper storage of organic materials like mulch, compost, or plant waste can attract pests, including rodents and insects. These pests can create health hazards for workers.

STATS

- The BLS reports that in 2020, there were approximately 38,500 injuries related to material handling, which includes improper stacking, storing, and moving of materials.
- In Canada, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) notes that material handling injuries are common in industries involving physical labor. Material storage injuries account for a significant portion of workplace injuries across labor-intensive sectors.
- Material handling incidents, including improper storage, contribute to about 20-25% of all workplace injuries in industries like construction and landscaping.

- More than 22,000 workers experienced severe injuries or illnesses that required time away from work during the same period. While not all of these injuries are directly linked to materials storage, improper handling and storage of chemicals can contribute to these statistics.