



**NEW!**  
**Complying With The California Ergonomics Standard  
 And The  
 CSRMA Ergonomic Hazard Evaluation And Resource Guide**

The Federal Ergonomics Standard may have been repealed, but Californian's do have a State Ergonomics rule (*CCR Title 8 Section 5110*) that requires compliance for any California employer triggering the following **requirements** (*please contact David Patzer, CSRMA Risk Control for more information regarding the California Ergonomics Standard and whether it applies to your agency*):

1. Employers must establish and implement a program designed to minimize cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs) if more than one person is diagnosed with CTDs as follows:
  - a) The CTDs are work related.
  - b) The employee(s) incurred the CTDs while performing a job process or operation of identical work activity.
  - c) The CTDs were reported in the past 12 months.
  - d) A licensed physician objectively identified and diagnosed the CTDs. .... **5110(a)**
  
2. The program must include the following:
  - a) A work site evaluation
  - b) Control of exposures that caused the CTDs
  - c) Training of employees ..... **5110(b)**

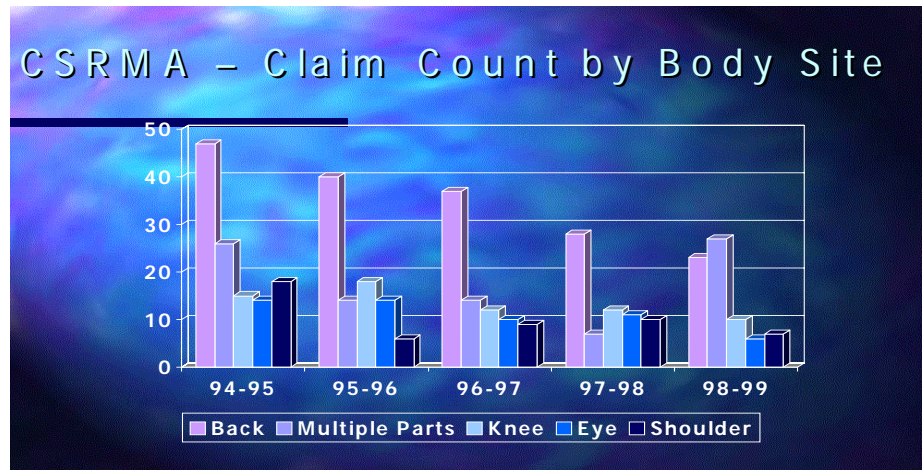
The sanitation industry is plagued by debilitating and costly occupational injuries to workers' backs, necks, shoulders, and extremities. Many of these injuries could be prevented by simple changes in the workplace and in work activities.

Aside from legal compliance, *every* CSRMA member concerned about worker safety and loss control should be focusing their safety efforts and resources towards the identification and elimination of ergonomic risk factors in their workplace. Consider the following:

- ✓ MSD's are the most common workplace illness and injury in the country:
  - Account for 62% of all Occupational Illnesses
  - Account for 1/3 of all Occupational Injuries and Illnesses
  - Frequency has increased 1,300% in last 12 years
  
- ✓ MSD's are the most expensive workplace illness and injury in the country:
  - MSD's account for \$1 of every \$3 spent in WC
  - Average non-surgical back injury = \$8,000 (*CSRMA data*)
  - Average surgical back injury = \$75,000 (*CSRMA data*)

•Average carpal tunnel injury = \$29,000 (*CSRMA data*)

- ✓ MSD's account for three of the top five most frequent CSRMA workers' compensation claims in each of the last 5 years (*see chart below*)



Ergonomics is the study of improving the fit between the worker and the physical demands of the workplace. Knowledge of ergonomics is used to design the workplace and work activities to help the worker avoid injury and to improve productivity. The primary types of injuries or traumas that ergonomics deals with are the cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs). As the name implies, CTDs are caused by cumulative exposure to ergonomic risk factors. CTDs primarily affect the neck, back, shoulders, and extremities. The symptoms of CTDs may not be noticeable until after months or even years of exposure. Symptoms may appear to be acute after a sudden and severe onset. They can include chronic pain, numbness, tingling, and limited range of motion.

#### **Factors that can contribute to CTDs:**

1. Awkward posture
2. Forceful exertion, including heavy lifting
3. Repetitive work
4. Vibration from tools and equipment
5. Pinching (contact stress) during tool use and material handling
6. Temperature extremes
7. Lack of recovery time to affected body parts

*Note:* Repeated localized fatigue or soreness after completion of the same task or day's work often indicates that the worker is being exposed to conditions that can lead to CTDs.

#### **Techniques for reducing CTDs:**

1. Proper lifting and material handling
2. Use of equipment to reduce load and strain
3. Employee rotation for repetitive tasks
4. Use of ergonomically designed tools
5. Use of personal protective equipment
6. Appropriately timed rest periods

**To help members address this issue, CSRMA Risk Control has developed a tool that is designed to assist with the following:**

- ✓ Move toward compliance with the California Ergonomics Standard
- ✓ Train their staff on ergonomic and biomechanical risk factors
- ✓ Evaluate their staff for the presence of ergonomic symptoms for purposes of early intervention
- ✓ Evaluate their facility and work practices for ergonomic hazards
- ✓ Develop solutions for identified ergonomic risk hazards

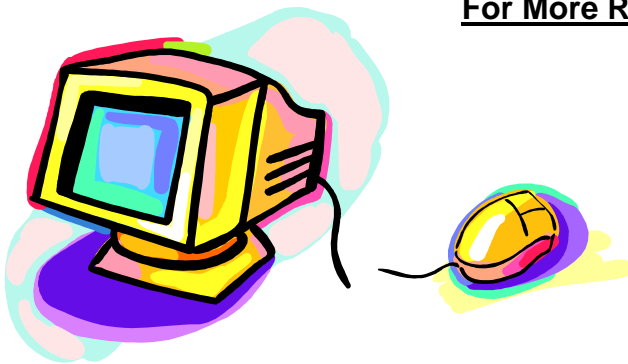
**The Guide is available, *free of charge to CSRMA members*, by calling Liza Hom at 415.371.5409 or at [lhom@rfdriver.com](mailto:lhom@rfdriver.com).**

**Visit the CSRMA Web Site at**

**[WWW.CSRMA.ORG](http://WWW.CSRMA.ORG)**

***Or contact***

*David Patzer, CSRMA Risk Control  
500 Washington Street, Suite 300  
San Francisco, CA 94111*



**For More Risk Control Resources**