



# FS/HAAF GARRISON SAFETY OFFICE

*Outsmart the Darkness: Your Weekly Safety Spotlight™*



## Hand Trucks & Dollies

Hand trucks and dollies are essential for efficient material movement, but improper use or maintenance can lead to serious injuries. This training will cover safe operating procedures, pre-use inspection techniques, and proper load securing to minimize risks associated with these non-powered MHE tools.

### Understanding Load Limits & Balance is Crucial

- Exceeding the hand truck's rated capacity dramatically increases the risk of tipping and loss of control, potentially causing serious injury.
- Distribute the load evenly across the platform or against the frame – uneven weight distribution creates instability and makes maneuvering difficult.
- Consider the center of gravity; heavier items should be positioned lower and closer to the wheels for improved stability during transport.

### Safe Maneuvering Techniques Prevent Accidents

- Walk slowly and deliberately, maintaining a firm grip on the handle – avoid running or rushing while operating a hand truck/dolly.
- When navigating ramps, always face the ramp and control the descent speed – never allow the load to pull you down the ramp.
- Be aware of your surroundings and anticipate potential obstacles – plan your route and avoid sudden turns or stops.

### Precautions, Hazard Abatement, Etc.

- **Mandatory Pre-Shift Inspections:** Implement a documented pre-shift inspection checklist that operators must complete before using any hand truck or dolly, removing defective equipment from service immediately.
- **Regular Maintenance Program:** Establish a scheduled maintenance program for all hand trucks and dollies, including wheel replacements, frame repairs, and handle tightening, to proactively address potential issues.
- **Load Limit Signage & Training Reinforcement:** Clearly display load capacity limits on each unit and provide refresher training on load assessment and safe securing techniques at least annually.
- **Designated Storage & Pathway Management:** Provide a dedicated storage area for hand trucks and dollies when not in use, and ensure pathways are clear of obstructions to prevent tripping hazards and facilitate safe maneuvering.
- **Proper Load Securing Equipment Availability:** Ensure an adequate supply of straps, banding, and other load securing devices are readily available and in good working order, with training on their proper application.