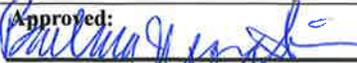


## D20 Safe Operating Procedures for Rack Handling-Merchandisers

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### **SAFETY ALERT!**

Racks are an essential part of our operations, but mishandling them can lead to accidents, injuries, and damage to products. Handling racks in a garden center can pose several hazards if proper safety precautions are not followed.

**Do NOT use this equipment unless you have received proper instruction.**

### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT



### POTENTIAL HAZARDS

**Physical Strain and Injuries:** Moving racks without using the proper techniques can lead to strains, sprains, and back injuries. Awkward positions and overexertion can contribute to these injuries.

**Trips and Falls:** Racks create opportunities for trips and falls not only with merchandisers, but also HD associates and customers. These can be created by leaving the tow bar down or not properly and instantly cleaning up the work area after unwrapping a cart.

**Falling Objects:** Improper stacking or unbalanced loads on racks can cause items to fall, potentially endangering anyone nearby.

**Collisions:** Moving racks can lead to collisions with other racks, terrain, equipment, or coworkers. Poor visibility and not paying attention to surroundings can result in accidents.

**Pinch Points:** Rack components, such as wheels, joints, and hinges, can create pinch points that can catch fingers, hands, or clothing, leading to injuries.

**Crushing Hazards:** Workers might get caught between racks or between a rack and a stationary object, which can result in crushing injuries.

**Insufficient PPE:** Not wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves and closed-toe shoes, can expose workers to cuts, abrasions, and other injuries.

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**Inadequate Training:** Lack of proper training on how to handle racks safely, including inspection, handling techniques, and proper usage, can lead to accidents.

### PRE-OPERATIONAL SAFETY CHECKS (Remember: **SAM**)

**Survey**~ Prior to moving the shipping racks, survey the area for any sloped, bumpy, or uneven ground and select the best route to travel. Make sure the area around the racks is clear of obstacles and clutter.

**Assess**~ Prior to moving the shipping racks, make sure to assess each rack. Walk around the rack and see if you are able to move it on your own or require assistance. Observe for any product that may have shifted during delivery, or any damage to cart or product while keeping an eye out for items such as bent or broken components, bent or broken frames or shelves or loose bolts. If you notice any issues, report them to your supervisor immediately. Using damaged racks can pose serious risks. If needed, remove items off a broken rack before moving.

If a rack looks too heavy to move obtain assistance from another Jeffery's merchandiser OR a Home Depot Associate. Alternatively, if there are any heavy containers, consider moving a few off the rack to a flat Home Depot cart or buggy. Once the rack is lighter than you should be able to safely move it to your merchandising area.

**Move**~ Once you have surveyed your route and assessed then cart, then safely move the cart to the area you will be merchandising it. Keep the rack close to the bench you are placing the product on.

### STARTING PROCEDURES

1. The very first thing to do when moving a shipping rack is to determine which side of the shipping rack has the pair of turning wheels. Gently move the rack and the pair that moves are the turning wheels. Turn the rack so the turning wheels are closest to you and you will then be able to safely move the rack.
2. When receiving a wrapped rack, first move the rack to the area you will be merchandising it in. Then take the entire plastic off by cutting or pulling it off. Immediately dispose of the plastic in a Home Depot buggy. Do not leave any debris on the floor or hanging off the rack as this creates trip hazards for yourself, associates, and customers. Once the Home Depot buggy is full remove it off the sales floor to the trash compacter in the receiving department.

### OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Once you have surveyed your route and assessed the rack, it is ready to be moved.
2. The proper way to move a shipping rack is standing off to the side of the rack with a clear view of sight ahead.
3. When pulling a shipping rack, make sure you are always looking behind you to ensure that nothing is in your way.

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4. If a rack is ever too difficult or heavy to move, then two people are required to move a rack. When moving a rack with two people, ensure that both are standing off to the side of the rack with a clear view of sight ahead of them. If there is uneven terrain, it is especially important to ensure that two people are moving the rack in order to avoid a tip over hazard. Both handlers must stand off to a side of the rack with a clear view of sight ahead.
5. If there is uneven terrain it is especially important to ensure that two people are moving the rack in order to avoid a tip over hazard. For uneven terrain and empty racks with wooden shelves it is essential that you first knock these shelves down to below waist level before moving so the shelves do not fall off or get caught by the wind while in transit.
6. When storing racks in tight spaces, it is important to be mindful of both your hand and feet placement. Keep your hands on the inside of the rack to avoid jamming it between two racks. The proper placement for your hands is to move your fingers on the inside of the shipping rack and then complete storing the rack. You also want to be aware of the rack momentum as it can potentially strike your feet if you do not maintain control of the rack.
7. Once the rack is in position, make sure to block the turning wheels with any type of wood or brick to prevent the rack from rolling away.
8. Always be mindful of where you leave your racks when you are working with them.
9. **Make sure the tow bar is always kept in the upright position.** Racks in bump outs must be stored with tow bars in upright position. This best practice avoids trip hazards not only for yourselves, but also HD associate and customers.
10. Always work with the rack close to the display area.

## PROHIBITED ACTIONS

When moving racks there are a couple very explicit “Do NOT Do Tips” to always keep in mind.

- × **Never** leave the tow bar down. Always put it in an upright position. If it is broken and will not stay up on its own, use tape to secure it.
- × **Never** link racks together and pull as a chain.
- × **Never** move more than two empties or one full rack at a time. Once the racks are taken to the holding area ensure that the tow bar is in the upright position.
- × **Never** leave links hooked together in the store or garden center. Always unhook the racks while working on them.
- × **Never** use the tow bar for pulling racks These tow bars are for use in the greenhouse only. Not in the garden center.
- × **Never** attempt to hold up a shipping rack that has started to tip over as you could be injured by the weight of the rack and products falling. Your safety is more important than damaged product!
- × **Never** pull a rack while standing in front of it as this increases the risk of a rack tipping over on you.
- × **Never** stand on the bottom rack to reach the top shelf OR use the rack as a climbing ladder. If you need to reach elevated height, use the yellow ladders found throughout the store. Never use a step stool. If you need to reach a higher height than the yellow ladder permits, then ask a HD Associate for

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assistance. **NEVER STAND ON THE DISPLAY SHELVING OR SHIPPING RACKS.**

### RACK DISPLAY AND STORAGE

- ❖ Always be mindful of where you leave your racks when you are working with them.
- ❖ Make sure the tow bar is always kept in the upright position. Racks in bump outs must be stored with tow bars in upright position. This best practice avoids trip hazards not only for yourselves, but also HD associate and customers.
- ❖ Garden centre sidewalks must be kept free of petals/plant material from culling, shrink wrap from shipping racks, and puddles from watering.
- ❖ Know where the garden center stores its brooms and squeegees for clearing the walkways of debris, throw all plant material culled and any shrink wrap immediately into the dustbin or empty cart to be disposed of later.

### RACKS AND BAD WEATHER

When you work in an outdoor garden center always be mindful of extreme weather changes. Home Depot will monitor and alert you to conditions changing but it is also important that you are aware as well and respond appropriately.

- ❖ Whenever is possible safely secure the racks before an impending storm.
- ❖ Particularly on windy days any racks with wooden shelves should be knocked down to at least our waist or knee level to avoid any wooden shelves from flying up due to the wind and striking our face.
- ❖ For any racks that are displayed in the parking lot we require racks to be grouped together in a large square. Ensure that they are touching each other tow bar to tow bar as shown in the video you can see the handler joining one rack with another rack with the two tow bars touching to avoid any potential trip hazards with the tow bar falling down.

### BROKEN RACKS

- ❖ If you ever encounter any tow bars that are broken or will not stay in the upright position, then you can use a zip tie supplied by the Home Depot to secure that tow bar in an upright position, this rack is then ready to be shipped back to the greenhouse for repair and you can avoid any trip hazards that could happen in the store.
- ❖ You can also use shipping tape or duct tape borrowed from the Home Depot to secure any broken tow bars that you encounter. Tape the tow bar in the upright position wrapped around both posts of the shipping rack. Once this is done the rack is ready to be shipped back to the greenhouse for repair.

### Rack Security

There has been an increase in rack theft. With your diligence, observation, and assistance we can work together on reducing these incidents.

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**AT NO TIME SHOULD YOU EVER PUT YOUR LIFE IN DANGER OVER SAVING A RACK FROM THEFT!!!**

Only if you can safely do so then please follow these instructions ....

- ❖ IF you witness **RACK THEFT** at a HD Store - please **call 911, ask for POLICE,**
- ❖ **STATE that you have information regarding an “ongoing Investigation” at Division #11**
- ❖ **Give police the License Plate of the vehicle & ask police to follow the vehicle ASAP.**
- ❖ You can also reference Jeffery’s Police Contact - **Constable Jim D’Angelica**
- ❖ This is the person Jeffery’s has been working with (his name is GEMI – but he goes by JIM).
- ❖ If you are able to get License Plates and pictures “*from a distance*” that would be great!
- ❖ Best to zoom in with camera if possible, for more detail.
- ❖ The best way to combat rack theft is to report empty racks immediately for pick up using the reporting procedures found on our website. The less empty racks that are sitting in the parking lots the less there are available to be stolen.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Effective communication is vital. If you need help or if there's a potential hazard, alert your coworkers or supervisor. Teamwork and clear communication can prevent accidents and ensure everyone's safety.

