



Aug. 29, 2011

Dear Beverage Distribution Company:

The purpose of this letter is to alert you to an important issue and provide you with information that may be used to protect the safety and health of your workers. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) inspection activity at some beverage distribution operations initiated an analysis of the injury and illness rates for workers involved in the beverage distribution industry. These inspections, along with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics¹ data, indicate these workers have a significantly higher rate of musculoskeletal injuries than workers in most other industries. Typical beverage delivery activities often involve forceful exertions, repetitive motions and awkward postures for prolonged durations, which can cause serious injuries of the back, shoulders, arms, wrists, hands and legs.

In an effort to prevent these injuries, I would like to call your attention to well-known and easily available control technology and techniques to address these hazards. To help you control and recognize the ergonomic hazards that may be present at your workplace, I would like to make you aware of the following report that can assist you: *Ergonomic Intervention for the Soft Drink Beverage Delivery Industry*, published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. This reference is available at www.cdc.gov/niosh/96-109.html. I encourage you to review this information and take steps to eliminate or reduce potentially serious injuries.

As indicated in the report, a comprehensive ergonomics program designed to eliminate or reduce musculoskeletal injuries should include, but may not be limited to, the following elements.

- 1) Beverage delivery task analysis and customer site evaluations to determine whether ergonomic hazards are present.
- 2) Worker and management site-specific ergonomics training to ensure workers and managers are aware of ergonomic hazards and control methods.
- 3) Hazard control - reduce ergonomic hazards causing musculoskeletal injuries using:
 - a. Engineering controls:
 - i. delivery vehicle pull-out step-on platforms, exterior grab handles on all bays and drop down bay shelves;

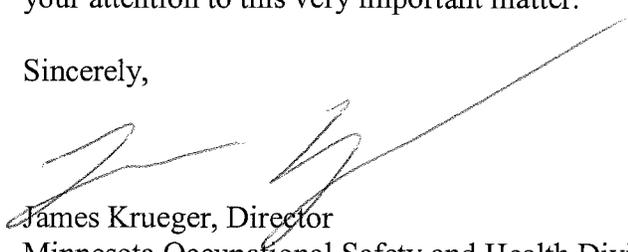
¹*Nonfatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Requiring Days Away From Work, 2009*; available at www.bls.gov/news.release/osh2.nr0.htm.

- ii. appropriate delivery equipment, such as hand trucks, stair climbers, conveyors and hoists, and lightweight plastic pallets; and
 - iii. product modifications, such as optimizing beverage packaging and contents to reduce package weight and improve grip;
 - b. Administrative controls:
 - repair and maintenance programs for vehicles and equipment used by delivery drivers; and
 - c. Work organization controls:
 - pre-planned unloading for the driver route, including route-specific loading diagrams to reduce multiple manual product handling.
- 4) Ergonomic program evaluation to determine if the ongoing process is effective:
 - a. evaluation and trending of the injury logs to ensure reduction in the incidence and severity rates of musculoskeletal disorders; and
 - b. worker feedback on the effectiveness of controls.

In addition to the noted publication, there are various other resources available to help you evaluate and control the hazards of your particular worksite. The Minnesota OSHA Area Office closest to you is available to answer questions. Information is available on the federal OSHA website at www.osha.gov. Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation, which is separate from MNOSHA Compliance and is designed primarily for small employers (companies of 250 or fewer workers), is a free and confidential service that can help you identify and then find effective solutions for eliminating or controlling ergonomic hazards. The MNOSHA consultant can assist you in developing and implementing a safety and health management system for your workplace that includes the control of ergonomic hazards. You may also visit its Web pages at www.dli.mn.gov/WSC/BestPractices.asp.

I hope you will be able to use this information to prevent these needless ergonomic injuries from occurring. If you have any questions, call Minnesota OSHA at (651) 284-5050. Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,



James Krueger, Director
Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Division

c: Frank Ball, Executive Director, Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association

You are in receipt of this letter because Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) has your company classified in one of the following codes: North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 312111 – Soft Drink Manufacturing; NAICS 424810 – Beer and Ale Merchant Wholesalers; NAICS 424820 – Wine and Distilled Alcoholic Beverage Merchant Wholesalers; or D&B Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 51490504 – Soft Drink Distribution.