



OFSWA  
Ontario Forestry Safe Workplace Association

# Ergonomic Solutions

## Sit/Stand Stools

### ***Applications within forest industry:***

Sawmills and veneer & board mills

### *How the job is usually done*

Occupations such as trim saw operator and stacker operator involve a lot of standing that tends to cause back pain. The risk in occupations such as grader is prolonged sitting which raises the risk of a gradual onset back injury. The healthy body can tolerate staying in one position for only about 20 minutes.

### *Ergonomic concerns*

Prolonged stationary standing can result in a decrease of blood flow to tissues, causing swelling, muscle fatigue and pain, sore feet, loss of optimal posture and increased pressure between the discs in the lower back. Prolonged sitting increases the load on the walls of the spinal discs and increases the stress on the upper body muscle groups.

*The effects of prolonged sitting and standing can directly affect your performance at work as you can increase the likelihood of injuring yourself and causing undue fatigue and stress on your muscles and joints.*

### *Recommended adjustments*

Because of their unique design, sit/stand stools allow the worker to alternate easily between sitting, standing, and walking. This reduces stress on the lower back and legs. Sit-stand stools also help reduce the amount of back and neck flexion, thus minimizing the overall fatigue from standing. Sit/stand stools can be potentially beneficial whenever there is prolonged standing or sitting in forestry mills, provided there is enough space to accommodate one. *Sit-stand stools are only one of the ways to reduce fatigue and stress. The employer should also be proactive by encouraging regular movement in each job. Workers should be proactive by ensuring they are moving regularly and stretching still muscles when necessary.*

For further information please contact OFSWA Consultant/Trainer – Ergonomist  
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OFSWA believes that the information and recommendations in this Ergonomic Tip Sheet are reliable and accurate, but the Association notes that conditions may vary greatly from one work area to another, and that a great variety of equipment and work processes are currently in use. Consequently, other and/or additional measures may be appropriate in certain situations. The Association therefore makes no further undertaking as to the sufficiency or applicability of the information and recommendations in this Ergonomic Tip Sheet.