Managing incoming and outgoing shipments, training employees, and implementing new technology — running a warehouse or distribution center requires you to shuffle numerous tasks at once.

But safety issues can easily bring all of that to a halt. In order to avoid accidents that can lead to costly shutdowns, safety needs to be top of mind for everyone in your facility. Here are five of the most common hazards to avoid in your warehouse or distribution center.

1. **FATIGUE**
   
   No matter how much training they have, warehouse workers are more likely to have an accident if they’re tired. Fatigued workers are more likely to use bad form and react slowly. As warehouses move increasingly towards 24/7 operations, non-traditional schedules are becoming more common. Since the physical demands of many jobs have decreased in recent years, many workers can work safely for longer shifts. But it may not be appropriate for all positions. The important thing to note here is that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to scheduling.

2. **MUSCLE STRAINS AND PAIN**
   
   It’s easy to develop musculoskeletal problems when you’re repeatedly lifting, reaching, and carrying items. While ergonomic equipment encourages proper movement, warehouse employees need regular training that teaches specific techniques to prevent muscle strain and pain. Because it’s easy for workers to fall into bad habits due to the repetitive nature of their work, these ergonomics should be included as part of the ongoing safety training schedule.

3. **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**
   
   Flammable items, poisonous substances, and other hazardous materials can create a serious safety issue if workers don’t know how to properly handle them. Like ergonomics, identification and handling of hazardous materials should be a part of your regular training program. Even workers who don’t interact with these materials should know how to recognize them so they can avoid them.
About ABM

ABM (NYSE: ABM) is a leading provider of facility services in the United States and various international locations. ABM’s comprehensive capabilities include janitorial, electrical & lighting, energy solutions, facilities engineering, HVAC & mechanical, landscape & turf, mission critical solutions and parking, provided through stand-alone or integrated solutions. ABM provides custom facility solutions in urban, suburban and rural areas to properties of all sizes - from schools and commercial buildings to hospitals, data centers, manufacturing plants and airports. ABM Industries Incorporated, which operates through its subsidiaries, was founded in 1909. For more information, visit ABM.com.