

# Rummel Construction, Inc.



## Stretch & Flex Injury Prevention Program

# Rummel Construction, Inc. Stretch & Flex Program

<u>Table of Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Why Stretch & Flex?	2
Stretch & Flex Basics	3
Stretch & Flex Warm Up	4
Full Body Stretch & Flex Routine	12

# **Rummel Construction, Inc.**

## **Stretch & Flex Program**

### Why Stretch & Flex

Each day professional athletes take the field to participate in sports that help them earn their living. The physical demands of these sports require the athletes take great care of their body because issues with injuries can have significant costs both financially and personally.

**Regular warm up and stretching is one of the methods used to prevent injury and enhance sports performance.**

**Heavy construction workers have physical demands that are greater than those of professional athletes. Any injury to a worker can have significant costs:**

- \*You have greater difficulty performing your job.
- \*The length of your career working in construction may be reduced.
- \*You have greater health care costs.
- \*You have a lower quality of life due to stiffness and pain.

**Please consider how you would feel living each day with pain, stiffness, and/or disability impact your life?**

To help reduce injuries, Rummel Construction, Inc. performed an analysis of injury data. Results demonstrated the following:

- \*64% of all injuries involved the back
- \*8% of injuries involved the knee or hip
- \*8% of injuries involved the shoulder
- \*7% of injuries involved the neck

One of the more common injuries that workers experience is a strain of muscle. These injuries result from short, tight muscles and/or muscles that are fatigued.

**Research has demonstrated that workers participating in Stretch & Flex programs can effectively increase their flexibility and reduce injuries.**

This primary purpose of this manual is to educate you about how you can better take care of your body and prevent injury. You can prevent muscle strains by participating in the Stretch & Flex program.

**Rummel Construction, Inc. firmly believes that the Stretch & Flex program is worth investing in for your personal health and injury prevention.**

# Rummel Construction, Inc.

## Stretch & Flex Program

### Stretch & Flex Basics

Flexibility is defined as the range of motion around a specific joint in the body. Poor flexibility can significantly limit movement of joints and increase the chance of injury.

Short, tight muscles often are the greatest contributor to poor flexibility. Stretching muscles is a means to counter act the shortened muscles and restore normal flexibility.

Performing the stretches correctly is an essential key to gaining the benefits and preventing injury. Here are some rules to follow:

#### **Rule #1: Never Stretch a Cold Muscle**

- \*When muscles are cold, they are at greater risk for injury.
- \*Performing an effective warm up is important to preventing muscle strains that can occur with stretching cold muscles.
- \*Chapter 3 covers the general warm up that should be performed prior to stretching.

#### **Rule #2: Stretch with Good Form**

- \*Proper technique in stretching is an essential key to getting the most out of the stretches.
- \*Always move into a stretch slowly. **NEVER BOUNCE!**
- \*Once in the correct body position, stretches should involve muscles feeling taught at the end point of the stretch.
- \*Stretching should never involve pain but slight muscle discomfort is OK when getting a deep stretch.

#### **Rule #3: Hold your Stretch Position**

- \*Once you get to the end point of a stretch, you want to hold that position for at least 10 seconds.
- \*Muscles do not release their tension and lengthen unless you hold them in the lengthened position for at least 10 seconds.
- \*Ideally, stretches should be held 20-30 seconds to get an effective release of muscle tension.

**Following these simple rules will help make your Stretch & Flex program effectively work for your benefit.**

# Rummel Construction, Inc.

## Stretch & Flex Program

### Warming Up

Warming up the body prior to work is a key to prevent injuries and maximizing the effectiveness of your stretching program. **Muscles that are warmed up properly are more elastic and less likely to be damaged or torn.**

The Heavy Construction worker needs to consider the physical demands of the job and prepare the muscles for work by warming them up. This warm up program is designed to target your joints and muscles in order to ready them for stretching.

### **Ankle Circles**

This warm up targets the ligaments, tendons, and muscles your ankles and feet. The goal is to reduce foot and ankle injuries such as a sprained ankle.

**Key to Stretch: Keep good posture while standing on one foot.**

\*Step #1: Stand with your hands on your hips and lift one foot off the ground. Balance your weight on the other foot.

Use a stable surface to balance against if you cannot stand on one foot without swaying.

\*Step #2: While balancing on one foot, extend (straighten) the opposite leg and perform ankle circles with a pointed toe.

Again, use a stable surface to balance against if you cannot stand on one foot without swaying.

\*Step #3: Slowly rotate your ankle 5-10 times in one direction and then change directions.

\*Step #4: Change foot that you are balancing on and repeat ankle circles.



# Rummel Construction, Inc.

## Stretch & Flex Program

### Standing Knee Lifts

This warm up targets the muscles in the hips and legs. The goal of this warm up is to reduce injuries to the hip flexors which can lead to lower back issues.

**Key to Stretch: Be sure not to round your back. Keep torso upright.**

\*Step #1: Stand with your hands on your hips and lift one foot off the ground. Balance your weight on the other foot.

Use a stable surface to balance against if you cannot stand on one foot without swaying.

\*Step #2: Slowly lift your knee to a position that is parallel to the ground. (90° at the hip)

If you cannot lift the knee to 90°, then lift the leg as high as possible.

\*Step #3: Slowly lower the leg to the start position.

Do not touch ground with foot. Keep your weight balanced.

Complete 5-10 knee lift reps for each leg.



# Rummel Construction, Inc.

## Stretch & Flex Program

### Standing Leg Curls

This warm up targets the muscles in the lower back and back of the legs. The goal of this warm up is to reduce injuries to the hamstrings which can lead to knee, hip, and lower back issues.

**Key to Stretch: Be sure not arch or round your back.**

\*Step #1: Stand with your hands on your hips and lift one foot of the ground behind you. Balance your weight on one foot.

Use a stable surface to balance against if you cannot stand on one foot without swaying.

\*Step #2: Bend your knee and slowly bring your heel to your buttocks.

\*Step #3: Extend your knee by slowly straightening your leg.

Complete 5-10 repetitions for each leg.



# Rummel Construction, Inc.

## Stretch & Flex Program

### Shoulder Shrugs with Rotation

This warm up targets the muscles of the neck and shoulders. The goal of this warm up is to reduce neck and shoulders injuries.

\*Step #1: Stand with both feet on the ground hip width apart and the toes pointing forward. Place your hands by your side.

Roll your shoulders inward and round your upper back.

\*Step #2: While the shoulders are forward, lift your shoulders towards your ears as if you were shrugging your shoulders.

\*Step #3: Drop your shoulders and rotate your shoulders back. Be sure to open your chest by squeezing your shoulder blades together.

Bring your shoulders down to rest.

Perform 5-10 repetitions. Reverse direction and repeat.



# Rummel Construction, Inc.

## Stretch & Flex Program

### Shoulder Circles

This warm up targets the muscles of the neck and shoulders. The goal of this warm up is to reduce neck, shoulder, and rotator cuff injuries.

\*Step #1: Stand with both feet on the ground hip width apart and the toes pointing forward. Place your hands by your side.

Extend the arms fully out to the side and parallel to the ground. Face the palms downward.



\*Step #2: Begin making small circles in a forward direction. Slowly increase the size of shoulder circle.

Complete 10-20 circles in the forward direction.

Reverse direction and complete 10-20 additional circles.



# Rummel Construction, Inc.

## Stretch & Flex Program

### Neck Flexion & Extension

This warm up targets the muscles of the neck and shoulders. The goal of this warm up is to reduce neck and shoulder injuries.

**This warm up should not be performed by individuals with known neck issues without consent of physician.**

\*Step #1: Stand with both feet on the ground hip width apart and the toes pointing forward. Place your hands by your side.

Slowly drop your chin to chest and relax for 5-7 seconds. Breathe deeply.

Lift your head back to neutral. Complete 5-10 repetitions.



\*Step #2: From a neutral head position, gently lift your chin while tilting the head back slightly.

Focus on lifting the chin to the sky and stretching the front of the neck.

Hold the stretch for 5-7 seconds. Breathe deeply.

Return head back to neutral position. Complete 5-10 reps.



# Rummel Construction, Inc.

## Stretch & Flex Program

### Neck Rotation

This warm up targets the muscles of the neck and shoulders. The goal of this warm up is to reduce injuries to the neck and shoulders.

**This warm up should not be performed by individuals with known neck issues without consent of physician.**

\*Step #1: Stand with both feet on the ground hip width apart and the toes pointing forward. Place your hands by your side.

Keeping shoulders down, slowly rotate your head to the right shoulder.

Hold this position for 5-7 seconds. Breathe deeply.



\*Step #2: Slowly rotate your head back to neutral and continue to rotate head to opposite shoulder.

Hold this position for 5-7 seconds. Breathe deeply. Be sure to keep shoulders down.

Complete 5 repetitions to each side.

This head motion should mimic a person saying "no". Gradually increase the range of motion.



