



Working together for a healthier world™

## Showcasing Best Practices – An Ergonomics Case Study

Reducing the ergonomic stress and strains associated with aseptic operations can sometimes pose a difficult challenge. However, the cross-functional Ergonomic Teams at Pfizer's Lincoln Nebraska facility are to be congratulated for their achievement in implementing innovative solutions and challenging the status quo.

Virtually all of the changes made result from taking a fresh look at how a task was currently being done and asking the simple question, "*What would it take to do the job better ergonomically?*" The teams' responses have produced measurable results as ergonomic injuries have been reduced by about 70% since May 2005.

### Tank-tugger



Power Pushers become tank-tuggers: The addition of a metal bar to the bottom leading edge of tanks provides an attachment point for the Pusher's grabbing mechanism, enabling a single operator to safely move even the largest production tanks left, right, backwards, or forwards by manipulating controls located on the unit's handles. Targeted ergonomic improvements to back and shoulder strains.

### Bottle De-capper



Media preparation for vaccine production included twisting off by hand the caps of several yeast extract bottles, which can cause repetitive motion injuries. The new de-capper virtually eliminates this by doing exactly what it is expected to do - quickly remove caps from bottles by way of an electronic drill-like device attached to the top of the unit. To further reduce torque on the wrists of operators who had to hold bottles during the de-capping process, the de-capper was adjusted to include an operating handle. This device has the added benefit of reducing the task completion time by more than half, resulting in a cost savings as well as an ergonomic improvement.

### Tank Steam Lock Break Tool



Sterilization of process tanks used in biological production can result in "baking" of the steam lock caps making it difficult to remove them. Previously, operators used two wrenches, moving in opposite directions and applying significant force to loosen them. A stainless steel tool with an extended handle was devised to fit snugly over the metal steam lock caps, eliminating the need for two wrenches. The handle provides enough additional leverage that any technician working in the area can safely remove the "baked" steam locks with minimal effort.