IMA-NA CASE STUDY #5
An Ergonomics Fix that Improved Safety and Productivity!

• In a typical week, the Chattanooga AMCOL blending plant receives 10 hopper cars full of bentonite via rail.

• The unloading process required operators to manually set cars up by engaging in a number of ergonomically challenging activities, including bending over and laying beneath rail cars.

• A new hydraulic boot lift was installed that greatly improved the ergonomics of rail car unloading - one hourly person can raise and lower the boot lift with a control lever.

• In a few months, the boot lift has achieved several improvements:
  o A 66% reduction in the ergonomic score.
  o An increase in productivity by reducing the amount of time it takes to unload the rail cars (9.1 hours to 6.6 hours).

• Employees have quickly adapted to the new process. “I’ve heard nothing but good things from everyone about it; the operators think it’s a significant improvement,” stated Plant Manager Dale Rogers.

Before

After