

TIPS TO FILE A SUCCESSFUL FREIGHT CLAIM

INITIAL SHIPMENT INSPECTION

- Verify the number of crates, skids and/or cartons against the total listed on the Bill of Lading.
- Look for any signs of damage to the shipment. Besides gross visual damage, the following may be signs of hidden damage and should be checked out:
 - Punctures to the packaging or stretch wrapping
 - Scrapes to the crate or packaging
 - Light or heavy impressions which compress the packaging.
- Look for signs that the shipment may have been repackaged. Material looking disorganized on the skid and stretched wrapped loosely, material that is on a skid without any protective packaging individually or corrugated protection around it.
- If possible, check underneath the skid or crate to see if there was any damage from fork truck forks.

RECEIVING DOCUMENTATION

- **IMPORTANT:** Legibly mark the delivery BOL with the word “Damaged” or “Shipment received in damaged condition”. Do not use words like “Subject to Inspection” or, “Concealed Damage”. If damage is extensive, the whole shipment or parts of can be refused.
- Do not specify the number of pieces thought to be damaged unless completely certain. Doing so limits the opportunity to file a claim for additional material if found after the fact.
- Make sure the driver’s copy of the delivery BOL looks like yours. Do not make any additional comments on your copy after the driver has left. The carrier will compare your copy with theirs.

GATHER THE INFORMATION FOR THE CLAIM

- Inspect the shipment thoroughly and make a list of the damaged pieces that will be claimed.
- Take pictures, preferably with the packaging, of the damaged pieces for back up for the material being claimed.
- Timeliness is important. Report the damage immediately to the carrier. This must be done within the 5 day time period allowed to file a claim after receipt of material.
- Do not discard the damaged material or packaging that it came in. The carrier may want to perform an inspection and they have up to 120 days to do so from the time they receive the initial claim information.

FILING THE CLAIM

- Carriers will normally require the following for a freight claim:
 1. Copy of the delivery BOL
 2. Completed claim form. Carrier websites have links to their freight claim forms. Links to those forms for the most commonly used carriers are listed below.
 3. Pictures of the damaged material/packaging.
 4. Supplier’s invoice to you for the value of the material.
 5. List of damaged items being claimed.

Links to claim forms for the most commonly used carriers:

R&L Carriers: <http://www2.rlcarriers.com/Images/claimform05.pdf>

AAA Cooper: <http://www.aaacooper.com/Downloads/ACTClaimForm.pdf>

S.E. Freight Lines: <https://www.sefl.com/vspdfdocs/SFLSimplifiedClaimForm.pdf>

Roadrunner: <https://www.rrts.com/Documents/DamageLossClaimWithInstructions.pdf>