



## **Work Safety Alert**

### **Falling through a Plastic Panel from the Top of a Covered Walkway**

- 1. Date of Accident :** July 2016
- 2. Place of Accident :** A Housing Estate
- 3. Summary :**

A cleaning worker stepped and broke a plastic panel while clearing rubbish on the top of a covered walkway. He fell about 3.4m to the ground and sustained serious injury. He died a few days later.

#### **4. Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Employers :**

To prevent worker/employee from falling through fragile panels of covered walkways, contractors/ employers should:

- appoint a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments in identifying all potential hazards associated with the work, taking into account the working environment and the nature of work;
- formulate safe work methods and procedures for clearing rubbish that built up on top of the covered walkway with due regard to the results of the risk assessments;
- strictly prohibit worker/employee from stepping on the top of the covered walkways;
- adopt safe work methods, such as using suitable equipment or tools to carry out the work, and ensure suitable working platforms or mobile elevating work platforms be provided and used for such work;.
- display warning notices at prominent work locations, particularly at access points to prohibit unauthorised entry into the unsafe place;



- if access to and/or working on the covered walkway cannot be avoided, ensure that the following safety measures are being taken:-
  - providing and maintaining suitable and adequate safe means of access to and egress from the top of the covered walkway;
  - installing effective perimeter edge protection and using stagings on the top surface of the covered walkway to spread the load; and
  - providing every worker/ employee who is engaged in the work with a suitable safety harness which should be continuously attached to a suitable and secure anchorage system from a safe place, and ensuring the proper use of the fall arresting equipment by the workers/ employees throughout the work;
- provide each worker/ employee employed at the workplace with a suitable safety helmet that equipped a chin strap, and take all reasonable steps to ensure the wearing of the safety helmet by the worker/ employee concerned;
- provide all workers/ employees concerned with the necessary safety information, instruction and training, and ensure that they are familiar with the safe work procedures and safety measures before they are assigned to work; and
- establish and implement an effective monitoring and control system to ensure all safety measures are strictly followed.

## 5. Reference :

- [Safe System of Work](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Code of Practice for Metal Scaffolding Safety](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Guidance Notes on Safe Use of Power-operated Elevating Work Platforms](#)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Click to view document



- [Guidance Notes on Classification and Use of Safety Belts and their Anchorage Systems](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [An Analysis on Occupational Fatalities - Casebook Volume 2](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [A Casebook of Fatal Accidents Related to Work-at-Height](#)<sup>1</sup>

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#### **DISCLAIMER**

This Work Safety Alert (“the Alert”) is issued at the earliest possible opportunity after a serious accident with a view to drawing the attention of interested parties to the general safety precautionary measures necessary to protect people engaging in similar work activities. The material contained in the Alert constitutes general guidance only. It does not reduce, limit, or replace, any legal obligations upon any person to comply with any statutory duties under relevant legislation. Users such as Managers and Supervisors should make their own evaluation of the information contained in the Alert to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices. The Labour Department does NOT accept any responsibilities for any loss or damage resulting from the use of or failure to use of the information on the Alert.

Note: The material contained in the Alert is not exhaustive, and will be supplemented/adjusted where necessary if more relevant information comes to light.