



Work Safety Alert

Fall Over Staircase Railing from a Wooden Ladder

1. **Date of Accident:** July 2022
2. **Place of Accident:** A duplex residential premises
3. **Summary:**

A worker while carrying out wallpapering work by riding on a wooden ladder near the upper landing of an internal staircase in a duplex residential unit fell over the staircase railing onto the lower floor. He sustained head injury and passed away two days later.

4. **Work Safety Alert for Proprietors/ Employers:**

To prevent any workers/ employees engaged in renovation work from falling from height, the proprietors/ employers should:

- appoint a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments to identify all potential hazards associated with the work, taking into account the nature of the work and the working environment, particularly those related to work-above-ground;
- formulate safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of the risk assessments, which should comply with the requirements of safety legislation, recognised safety standards and relevant guidelines;
- avoid work-above-ground where possible by, for example, providing and using specific hand tools to allow the work to be done on the ground, especially when the work is to be carried out adjacent to floor edges provided with railings or parapets;



- if work-above-ground cannot be avoided, take adequate steps, including the provision and ensuring the use of a suitable working platform with guard-rails and toe-boards, a suitable light-duty working platform or other safe means of support;
- for special working environment (such as a restrictive space) where a suitable working platform cannot be erected, provide relevant workers/ employees with suitable safety harnesses and provide suitable and secure anchor point(s), independent lifeline(s) or fall arresting system(s) for continuous attachment of the safety harnesses worn by the workers/ employees at the workplace;
- take adequate steps to ensure the proper use of safety harnesses, anchor points, independent lifelines and fall arresting systems by the workers/ employees throughout the work;
- avoid the use of ladders and substandard scaffolds when work-above-ground;
- provide and maintain suitable and adequate safe means of access to and egress from every place of work;
- provide each worker/ employee involved in the work with a suitable safety helmet equipped with a chin strap and ensure the proper wearing of the same by the worker/ employee throughout the work;
- 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; and
- establish and implement an effective monitoring and control system to ensure that all safety measures are strictly followed.



5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)¹
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training](#)¹
- [A Casebook of Fatal Accidents related to Work-at-height](#)¹
- [Occupational Safety for Repair, Maintenance, Alteration and Addition Works - Safety Hints for Owners and Tenants of Commercial and Residential Units](#)¹

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.

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