



Work Safety Alert Fall through a Floor Opening

1. **Date of Accident :** March 2023
2. **Place of Accident :** A residential building under demolition
3. **Summary :**

A foreman while working on 3/F of a residential building under demolition plunged to UG/F about 9 meters below through an unprotected floor opening. He was admitted to hospital for medical treatment and passed away 15 days later.

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

To prevent any workers/ employees from falling from height, contractors/ employers engaged in any work at or near dangerous places with floor openings should provide and maintain a safe system of work which should include, but not limited to, the following:

- appointing a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments to identify all potential hazards associated with the work (e.g. demolition), taking into account the nature of work and the work environment, particularly where there are dangerous places from which workers/ employees are liable to fall;
- formulating safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of risk assessments, and following the requirements of safety legislation and safety guidelines to minimise the risks exposed to the workers/ employees, such as falling hazard;
- ensuring the work can safely be done from a safe place and avoiding workers/ employees to perform work at or near any dangerous places where they are liable to fall;



- safeguarding all unprotected floor openings through which persons are liable to fall by suitable guard-rails or coverings;
- ensuring that the height of a guard-rail above the surface of the floor openings is not less than 900mm and not more than 1150mm for a top guard-rail and not less than 450mm and not more than 600mm for an intermediate guard-rail; and that the height of a toe-board or other similar barrier is not less than 200mm;
- ensuring that every covering provided for a floor opening is so constructed and maintained as to prevent the fall of persons, materials and articles; and the covering has been clearly and boldly marked as to show its purpose or be securely fixed in position;
- where work at or near any dangerous places cannot be avoided, providing every worker/ employee with a suitable safety harness with its lanyard continuously attached to a suitable and secure anchorage throughout the work and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the proper use of them by the worker/ employee;
- providing all workers/ employees concerned with the necessary safety information, instruction and training, and ensuring that they are familiar with the working environment, safe work procedures and safety measures; and
- establishing and implementing an effective monitoring and control system to ensure 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

¹ Click to view document



- [A Guide to the Provisions for Safe Places of Work under Part VA of the Construction Sites \(Safety\) Regulations¹](#)
- [A Casebook of Fatal Accidents Related to work-at-Height¹](#)
- [Overview of Work-at-Height Safety¹](#)

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.