



Work Safety Alert **Pressed to Death by Collapsed Wall**

1. **Date of Accident :** October 2020

2. **Place of Accident :** A hotel under construction

3. **Summary :**

While a worker was working on a tubular scaffold preparing for making a wall opening at a partition wall, a part of another wall above him suddenly collapsed and pressed him to death.

4. Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Employers :

To ensure the occupational safety of workers/ employees engaged in wall breaking work, the contractors/ employers responsible for the work 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, taking into account the nature of work, the working environment, the work method and sequence, the construction and stability of the walls concerned and those of all adjoining structures, particularly the hazards of falling materials and person falling from height;

- formulating safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of risk assessments, the requirements of safety legislation, codes of practice and safety guidelines to minimise the risks exposed to the workers/ employees concerned;

- ensuring the work is carried out by workmen with adequate training and experience under the immediate supervision of a competent person who should have sufficient technical knowledge and able to read and



understand the drawings, risk assessment report and method statement of the work;

- providing substantive support to the wall concerned and the adjoining structures as necessary to prevent any part of the wall or of the adjoining structures from accidental detaching, collapsing or failure during the work;
- providing and properly maintaining suitable and adequate safe means of access to and egress from every place of work;
- avoid work-above-ground where possible by, for example, using specific plant/ equipment to enable the work to be done on the ground;
- if work-above-ground cannot be avoided, providing and ensuring the use of suitable working platforms or other safe means of support by workers/ employees who are required to work above ground;
- whenever a scaffold is erected for the work-above ground as required, ensuring that every working platform erected on the scaffold is provided with suitable guard-rails and toe-boards, and that the height of a guard-rail above the surface of the working platform 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; that the height of a toe-board or other similar barrier erected on the platform is not less than 200mm;
- ensuring that every working platform erected on the scaffold is closely boarded or planked; and every board or plank rests securely and evenly on its supports;
- ensuring that the scaffold is inspected and certified safe by a competent person before being taken into use for the first time and at regular intervals not exceeding 14 days;
- providing each worker/ employee involved in the work with a suitable safety helmet equipped with chin strap and ensuring the proper wearing of the same by the worker/ employee throughout the work;



- providing all workers/ employees concerned with the necessary safety information, instruction and training, and ensuring that they are familiar with the 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
- [A Guide to the Provisions for Safe Places of Work under Part VA of the Construction Sites \(Safety\) Regulations](#)¹
- [Code of Practice for Metal Scaffolding Safety](#)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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