



Work Safety Alert **Struck by Dispersed Metal Tubes and Fell from Height**

1. **Date of Accident :** June 2020
2. **Place of Accident :** A recycling yard
3. **Summary :**

Bundles of scrapped metal tubes were being unloaded from a lorry-mounted crane and stacked up in piles. A worker while standing on a bundle of metal tubes to unrig another bundle stacked at a higher level, the metal tubes being unrigged suddenly dispersed, causing him to fall onto the ground and sustain fatal injury.

4. Work Safety Alert for Proprietors/ Employers :

To ensure the safety of workers/ employees engaged in material unloading operations, the proprietors/ 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 work, taking into account the size, shape, weight, centre of gravity and packing arrangement of the loads and the work environment, with particular attention paid to any unintended movement/ displacement of the loads being handled and the fall-from-height hazard;
- formulating safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of risk assessments, and following the requirements of relevant safety legislation, codes of practice and guidelines to minimise the risks exposed to the workers/ employees;
- where lifting operation is involved, appointing a competent and experienced lifting supervisor to oversee the lifting operation, including



rigging/ unrigging of loads, to ensure that all risks are effectively managed;

- ensuring that all the workers who direct, rig/ unrig and handle the loads have been properly trained in the principles of slinging and rigging, and are capable of using slinging/ rigging methods suitable for the loads to be lifted and unloaded;
- ensuring that the loads, in particular loose materials packed in bundles, are properly secured to prevent unintended movement/ displacement in the course of operations.
- ensuring the work can safely be done from the ground or a safe place, and avoiding workers/ employees performing work on material stacks with falling hazards;
- where above-ground-work is unavoidable, providing and ensuring the use of suitable working platforms or other means of support with adequate fall protection where necessary;
- where above-ground-work is unavoidable and the use of suitable working platforms are not reasonably practicable, 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 ensure 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 Work¹](#)
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment¹](#)
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training¹](#)
- [Code of Practice for Safe Use of Mobile Cranes¹](#)
- [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.

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