

# OHS ALERT

## **WORKER CRUSHED BY FALLING SHEETS OF BALUSTRADING GLASS**

In August 2018, a worker was crushed when multiple sheets of balustrading glass fell from a truck-mounted A-frame. He was standing on the ground beside the truck, holding and balancing the sheets in a near vertical position, while another worker removed a sheet of ply from behind the glass. The glass, weighing a total of approximately 160kg, overbalanced and fell onto him, forcing him to the ground, causing severe crush injuries to his back, chest and legs.

### **Preventing a similar incident**

Sheet materials, such as glass, plasterboard, stone and granite bench tops, pre-cast concrete panels and form-ply can fall if they are not adequately supported while being transported, handled, or stored.

The risk of injuries is high when glass sheets are being handled or moved and the sheets are not adequately inclined and supported by racking or transport frames. Workers or others in the immediate vicinity are at risk of being crushed, trapped or cut by falling sheets. In addition, workers risk musculoskeletal injuries when they are required to manually balance stacks of sheets during sorting and handling.

Duty holders should consider a combination of the following engineering and administrative risk controls because relying on one system may not be adequate:

- workers should never manually restrain or balance multiple sheets away from transport/storage frame's incline
- use a load rated rack or transport frame (suitable for material weights applied, potential wind loads and travel path side angles to be encountered), to securely store, cradle, lift, transport and restrain the sheets
- use adequately load rated restraining equipment
- use mechanical lifting equipment whenever possible
- implement regimes for maintenance, inspection and testing of all racking and lifting equipment
- have a lifting plan
- plan loading and unloading so as to avoid the need for accessing sheets from the middle or back of the stack by storing sheets of material of different types and sizes separately
- ensure storage and support systems are designed for forces resulting from unbalanced loads
- ensure appropriate and adequate training and supervision of workers
- ensure workers wear appropriate PPE.



**Contact the SAFETY HOTLINE: (07) 3231 4615**

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