

14/02/2020

# Fatality – fall through roof

9 January 2020

## Incident overview

A worker died after falling more than two metres through a fibro roof at Wollongong, while attempting to get onto a ladder to get off the roof.



## The investigation

- SafeWork NSW inspectors responded to the incident.
- SafeWork NSW commenced an investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident.

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## Safety information

Businesses are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety in accordance with the provisions of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#).

Consider 'reasonably practicable' control measures to manage the risks associated with falls.

Before starting work on a roof, you should inspect the condition of sheeting to determine if it can be walked on, such as a skylight, plastic or asbestos cement. Also, inspect the supporting roofing materials and fixings.

Make sure:

- you plan the work to avoid walking on brittle material
- you use an elevated work platform or boom lift, if possible
- you use temporary work platforms, such as crawling boards,
- you use a fall arrest system, such as a harness, with anchor points – train workers how to use it
- install safety mesh.

When you use a ladder, make sure:

- it's at a 1:4 ratio
- it's tied off at the top (and/or footed) and extends at least 900mm past the landing
- you don't unclip the lanyard until standing on the ladder
- you review your control measures.

## Further information

- [Code of practice for managing the risk of falls at workplaces](#)
- [Falls through skylights and plastic roof sheeting](#)
- [Working safely at heights](#)