

19/09/2022

Worker fatally crushed by stone slabs

20 August 2022

A 56-year-old warehouse worker sustained fatal injuries when he was crushed beneath two stone slabs at a warehouse in Beresfield. The stone slabs, with a combined weight of approximately 600kg, fell from an A-frame storage system landing on top of the worker.



The A-frame storage system where the incident occurred

Safety information

This is the second incident involving stone slab storage and movement within the last 8 months.

Workers or others in close proximity to stacked stone slabs are at risk of severe or fatal injuries by being crushed, trapped, or cut by falling slabs. Stone slabs or materials which have been stacked on their edges, are at high risk of falling when being handled or moved if the sheets are not adequately supported by suitable racking or transport frames.

Consider 'reasonably practicable' control measures to manage the risks associated with handling and storage of stone slabs.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing and the findings are not yet confirmed. SafeWork NSW has commenced an investigation in response to the incident to determine its cause and circumstances. No conclusions should be drawn from the information in this publication about the cause of the incident or the culpability of any party.

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Ensure:

Storing the sheets or slabs

- store the sheets or slabs on an A-frame, truss, post frame or other purpose-designed racking system, and ensure that the safe load limit of the storage system is not exceeded
- once stored, use appropriate restraints to retain sheets or slabs in position and prevent later movement due to wind, impact, or other actions
- if stored on a post frame, both posts must be adequately positioned to prevent the slabs from falling forward and must be re-positioned progressively as the material is removed from the frame

Lifting and handling sheets or slabs

- remain clear of hazard (fall) zones when lifting and handling sheets
- always stand in front of the posts which break the fall of the sheets or slabs. Never stand between the sheets or slabs and the posts
- use appropriate lifting equipment when handling sheets – do not exceed the working load limit of any lifting device
- ensure all workers are adequately trained and supervised for the tasks they are performing, the nature of the risks associated with the work, and the control measures implemented to deal with these risks
- use appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves).

Related guidance material

- [Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice – Safe Work Australia](#)
- [Working with sheet materials safety alert – SafeWork NSW](#)
- [Storage and handling of sheet materials – WorkSafe QLD](#)
- [Workers injured by stone slabs alert – WorkSafe QLD](#)

Further information

- [Traumatic event management plan – SafeWork NSW](#)
- [Mental health at work – NSW Government](#)
- [Speak Up Save Lives App – SafeWork NSW](#)
- [Subscribe to SafeWork NSW newsletters and updates](#)

View the latest incident information releases at safework.nsw.gov.au

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