

20/12/2021

## Worker crushed by stone slabs

**5 November 2021**

A 29-year-old worker was seriously injured while assisting to move stone slabs/offcuts in a factory at Kogarah. The stone was stored on post frame racking. The task involved one worker operating a gantry crane while a second worker positioned the grab of the crane onto the stone. The second worker was standing in front of the stone when approximately nine slabs fell, trapping the worker from the waist down. The injuries sustained include pelvic and leg fractures, as well as serious internal injuries.



The post frame racking where the incident occurred

### Safety information

Workers or others near stacked sheet materials are at risk of being crushed, trapped, or cut by falling sheets.

The risk of severe or fatal injuries is high when materials, which have been stacked on their edges, are being handled or moved and the sheets are not adequately supported by suitable racking or transport frames.

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

## 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
- never stand between the sheets or slabs, and the posts - always stand in front of the posts which break the fall of the sheets or slabs
- 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
- use appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves).

## More information

- [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](#)