

Safety Alert



Communication of Safety Information

The Hazard

Working at Heights without adequate fall protection.



SafeWork NSW will soon (tomorrow) have the power to issue instant penalty notices of up to \$3600 to NSW workplaces if they fail to protect employees against falls from heights.

This year alone, SafeWork NSW has attended 234 incidents involving falls from heights, including eight fatalities. Over half these incidents occurred in the construction industry.

Workers compensation data shows there were 12,136 claims relating to falls from heights between 2013/14 and 2015/16, representing a total cost of \$327 million and total lost work time of 126,945 weeks. This significantly impacts workers, their families and the NSW economy.

Under amendments to the NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation being gazetted today, SafeWork NSW inspectors will be able to issue penalty notices of \$3600 to corporations and \$720 to individuals for breaches relating to falls from heights.

What needs to be done?

Supervisors

Ensure that adequate fall protection is in place. Regularly check scaffold for signed scaff-tags (in the last 30 days), missing mid and top rail, missing kick boards and brick guards. Ensure that the minimum 225mm space requirement between the frame / brick work is maintained for scaffold and hang-on walkway systems. Ensure roof rail and first floor rail is in place.

Ensure that stair-voids are in place and ladders are secured (same applies to scaffold ladders).

Ensure that scaffold (roof catch) extends at least 1 metre above the fascia / gutter (900mm for hang-on walkway systems),

Ensure that trades do not work from trestles that can extend beyond above 900mm as per our stated requirements.