



Safety alert 21/2009

Edge protection fails

Incident

A construction worker fell approximately three metres off a balcony at a construction site, sustaining a fractured wrist. Two steel props had been installed to act as edge protection to the balcony open edge. The props were not installed safely and gave way when the construction worker made contact with them.

Contributing factors

Use of adjustable steel props for edge protection that were not positively fixed to prevent displacement.

Recommendations

1. Adjustable steel props are primarily designed for vertical loads; ideally they should not be used for edge protection unless they are positively fixed at both ends to the building structure.
2. Ensure edge protection complies with Regulation 3.55.
3. Consideration should be given to the risks while carrying out works near potential fall areas.
4. Ensure the appropriate edge protection and fall prevention measures are in place.

Further information

- [Code of practice – Prevention of falls at workplaces 2004](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996](#)

Further information can be obtained from WorkSafe's internet site www.worksafe.wa.gov.au or by contacting customer service on 1300 307 877 or email safety@commerce.wa.gov.au

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