

09  
May  
2022

# WSH ALERT

## FATAL ACCIDENT

### Renovation company owner fell through ceiling board

On 2 May 2022, the sole proprietor of a renovation company was surveying the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of a shophouse, where the wooden flooring had been removed, exposing the floor beams and the false ceiling board of the 1st floor. He fell between the exposed floor beams, through the false ceiling board and landed about four metres below. He was sent to the hospital where he passed away.

No fall prevention or protection measures were implemented.



Overview of the 2<sup>nd</sup> storey of the shophouse.

### Recommendations

Ceiling boards are fragile surfaces not designed to bear a person's weight and may give way once stepped on. There was a [recent similar accident](#) on 8 April 2022 where an engineer fell through a false ceiling while carrying out maintenance inspections. To prevent similar accidents, consider the following measures:

- **Safe work method:** Establish and implement a safe method of work for carrying out floor removal and survey works. Ideally, floor removal and surveying works should be done in stages so that the exposure to fragile surfaces can be minimised.
- **Identification of fragile surfaces:** Any fragile surface revealed upon floor removal must be identified and clearly marked. Instruct workers never to step directly on fragile surfaces.
- **Safe workplace:** Provide a safe way to access the work area at all stages of the work. Using secured crawl boards is one way to work safely around exposed floor beams and fragile surfaces.

- **Fall Prevention Plan (FPP):** Implement a FPP and a Permit-To-Work system for work activities where a worker could fall more than three metres. Along with staged floor removal, consider implementing a travel-restraint system to prevent falls or use a self-retracting lifeline to protect against falls in cases where there is not enough clearance for a shock-absorbing lanyard.

For more information, please refer to WSH (Work at Heights) Regulations 2013, WSH Council's [Code of Practice for Working Safely at Heights](#), [WSH Guidelines on Personal Protective Equipment for Work At Heights](#), and [Work At Heights Toolkit for Supervisors](#).

\* Information on the accident is based on preliminary investigations by the Ministry of Manpower as at 5 May 2022. This may be subject to change as investigations are still on-going. Please also note that the recommendations provided here are not exhaustive and they are meant to enhance workplace safety and health so that a recurrence may be prevented. The information and recommendations provided are not to be construed as implying liability on any party nor should it be taken to encapsulate all the responsibilities and obligations under the law.

### Worker run over by wheel loader

On 22 April 2022, a worker was walking towards a rest area at a worksite when he was run over by a wheel loader. He was sent to the hospital where he passed away on 5 May.

There was no barricaded pedestrian walkway at the accident location.



Overview of accident scene.

### Recommendations

The movement of construction vehicles must be carefully planned as an accident can result in serious injury or fatality. A previous [fatal accident](#) involving a wheel loader occurred on 3 June 2021. To prevent similar accidents, consider the following measures:

- **Traffic Management Plan (TMP):** Establish and implement a workplace TMP. The TMP should consider the provision of barricaded pedestrian walkways, blind spot mirrors, road humps and traffic signs.
- **Safe traffic layout:** Plan the traffic layout based on the risk assessment for movement of pedestrians and vehicles. High hazard locations (e.g. traffic junctions) must be identified so that risk controls (e.g. traffic lights, zebra crossing) can be put in place.
- **Safe area for resting:** Locate rest areas where there is minimal vehicular movement.
- **Safe driving:** Instruct vehicle operators to keep within the site speed limit and to look out for pedestrians when driving. Blind spots must be checked especially before turning or reversing. In high-risk areas, move the vehicle only under the direction of a trained ground guide.
- **Use of technology:** Where possible, use technology to ensure safe movement of vehicles. Examples include blind spot cameras, obstacle and personnel collision detector, and an interlock system that can stop the vehicle upon detection of upcoming collision.

For more information, please refer to [WSH Guidelines on Workplace Traffic Safety Management](#) and [6 Basic WSH Rules for Traffic Management](#).

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**Workplace injuries tend to rise around this time of the year. Remain vigilant against risks and prevent accidents.**

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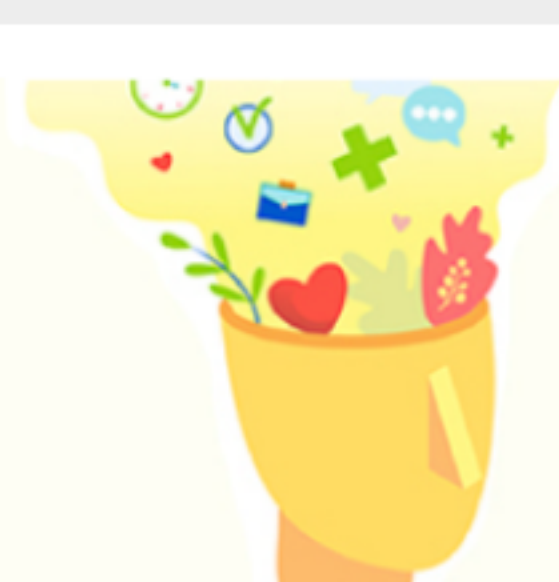


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