

YOUNG WORKERS FACT SHEET

WORKING AT HEIGHTS – PART 1:

FALLS FROM HEIGHTS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Working at heights can be dangerous, and a fall can result in serious injury or death.

Health and safety laws require specific measures to control the risks associated with working at heights. In particular, your workplace should have a system in place to prevent you from falling.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

You must follow the safety procedures set out by your employer for any given task. If you are not sure what is required, ask before you start work.

If you need to work at heights, check that:

- you have received workplace induction training before you start work
- you have been trained in the activity you're going to do
- safe access and walkways are provided to all parts of your workplace
- the area you are working on is stable
- physical barriers are in place over exposed edges
- you have been trained in the safe use of safety lines (if relevant)
- you have the appropriate personal protective equipment.

If any of the above requirements are not met, tell your employer.

Tell your employer if you nearly fall or fall without injuring yourself. Your manager can then reassess the risks.

If you have any concerns and your manager is unable to help, contact WorkCover for advice or to request a visit.

WHAT SHOULD MY EMPLOYER DO?

By law, your employer must undertake risk management to ensure your health and safety at work.

This means working with you to identify any foreseeable hazards, assess their risks, and take action to eliminate or control those risks.

For work at heights, your employer may use some of the following risk control measures:

- temporary work platforms, eg scaffolding
- mobile elevating work platforms, eg boom type or scissor lift
- guardrails, eg around pits, tanks, floor openings or exposed edges
- industrial fall arrest systems, designed to stop a fall using safety lines, eg harnesses or lanyards
- portable ladders (for lightweight work of a short duration only).

Your employer must provide you with information, instruction, training and supervision regarding these risk control measures.

If you tell your employer that you nearly fell or fell without injuring yourself, your employer must do a risk assessment to decide whether any action is required to prevent the incident from re-occurring.

If your employer doesn't have a written risk assessment, get them to contact WorkCover for advice.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For general guidance, read the following WorkCover publications:

- *Safe working at heights guide 2006* (no WC01321)
- *Code of Practice: Safe Work on Roofs* parts 1 and 2 (no WC00304 and WC00308.1).

For more information or to request an advisory visit, call WorkCover on **13 10 50** or visit www.workcover.nsw.gov.au

Disclaimer

This publication may contain occupational health and safety and workers compensation information. It may include some of your obligations under the various legislations that WorkCover NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate legislation.

Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website (www.legislation.nsw.gov.au) or by contacting the free hotline service on 02 9321 3333.

This publication does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law as it applies to particular problems or to individuals or as a substitute for legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice if you need assistance on the application of the law to your situation.

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