


Safety Bulletin for dropped / falling objects.

New Zealand, March 2022

Reminder	Duty holder obligations
<p>Falling / dropped objects are a leading cause of death and serious injury in the construction industry and pose a risk to people in streets adjacent to construction sites. Even a relatively light and small object can cause serious or fatal injuries when it falls from height and hits a person.</p> <p>Each year, WorkSafe is notified of hundreds of incidents involving falling objects (e.g. hand tools, scaffolding tubes, and timber).</p> <p>Common causes of objects falling in Construction</p> <p>Construction equipment and materials often fall from heights due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps between perimeter safety screens or holes in safety netting/mesh. • Missing toe/kick boards on scaffolding. • Debris or materials coming loose from plant or loads while they are being lifted. • Being stored close to edges or left unsecured. • Being blown from structures by wind. • Being knocked or dropped. 	<p>Employers have a duty to provide and maintain a safe working environment to employees (including contractors) so far as is reasonably practicable.</p> <p>Duty holders (employers and contractors) must also ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that other persons (such as members of the public) are not exposed to risks impacting their health or safety arising from the business activities.</p> <p>Key considerations</p> <p>Risk prevention measures that stop objects from falling in the first place are better than measures which are only effective after an object has fallen.</p> <p>Reducing the risk may involve a single risk control, or combination of two or more different controls, to be effective.</p>
Photo	Risk control measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Eliminate the risk by designing it out of the build. ✓ Tethering of tools to your person. ✓ Use of guardrail systems that incorporate mesh infill panels & kickboards. ✓ Barricade or fence off exclusion zones at ground level, below elevated perimeter/edge work. ✓ Perimeter safety screens or perimeter scaffolds enclosed with safety mesh, hoarding boards. ✓ Restrain loose materials with ropes, ratchet straps or adequate weights, remove from at height areas. ✓ Secure scaffold planks with proprietary clips to prevent dislodgement/uplift from high winds. ✓ Introduce safety drop zones.