

Safety and health alert

13/94 Fatal accident - glass handling

Incident

A glazier received fatal head injuries with multiple fractures of the skull, when he was crushed beneath six plates of glass weighing more than one tonne.

The glass was being manually unloaded from a delivery truck by four men. The truck had been parked on sloping ground which caused the glass on one side of the 'A' frame used for transport to be tipped towards the vertical position. One of the inbuilt hydraulic jacks used to steady the truck during the unloading was packed with two clay cored bricks to level the truck and bring the glass on the 'A' frame back to a safe angle. The jacking could have been achieved without the use of packers.

During the unloading procedure the bricks crumbled, causing the truck to drop and the glass to pitch forward off the 'A' frame. The deceased was struck by the falling glass.

In 1989 a person died in similar circumstances in Kalgoorlie when a brick, being used inappropriately to support a truck ramp, crumbled. Other similar incidents have been recorded where bricks have been used for packing under equipment.

Factors

1. The inappropriate use of bricks for packing purposes.
2. Unloading glass from a vehicle on sloping ground reducing the safe lean on the load.

Recommendations

1. Glass should not be unloaded on sloping ground where the safe lean on the load is reduced.
2. Trucks, plant and equipment should only be raised or levelled with suitably designed jacks or vehicle stands. If packing is required, generally only substantial timber sections should be used.
3. **WARNING** - bricks must not be used for packing or assisting with jacking of plant and equipment

Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the WorkSafe internet site www.worksafe.wa.gov.au, or by contacting customer service on 1300 307 877 or email: safety@docep.wa.gov.au.

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