

# Safety and health alert

## 05/99 Falling bricks pin bricklayer

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### Incident

In October 1998 whilst moving window frames two sections of a pack of bricks slid down a built up sand pad and trapped a bricklayer. An elevated sand pad had been loaded out with bricks. The bricklayer who was working alone was setting out the window frames in their approximate position around the lower section of the embankment.

The following morning he noticed that the sand had been eroded from underneath two of the packs of bricks on the top of the embankment and he was concerned that they may fall onto the frames below.

He started to move the frames when he heard a sound from the bricks and noticed sand moving down the embankment. Before the bricklayer could react the bricks caught him on the upper legs and lower back pinning him to the ground. It took him 45 minutes to dig himself out of the sand.

### Factors

1. The sand pad in some areas around the floor slab was barely wide enough to accommodate the width of a full pack of bricks.
2. The height of the embankment was approximately 1500mm above natural ground level and was too steep.
3. The bricklayer was working alone.

### Recommendations

1. That supervisors be aware of the likely hazards when the sand pad is not wide enough to safely accommodate packs of bricks hence not leaving enough room for storage of materials and the intended work.
2. That on elevated sand pads there is a low angle of repose or designated storage areas.
3. That workers not work in isolation.

### Further Information

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

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