



# Safety Alert Property Services Group

## Control of Dropped/ Falling

Issue Date: 24 May 2023

### Context:

There has been two recent high potential near miss incidents involving objects falling from height into public spaces at RMIT.

### Hazard:

#### Objects that can fall from height include:

- Hand-held equipment such as drills, saws and tools
- Materials such as nails, pieces of wood and debris
- Unsecured material, fittings or fixtures

### Controlling the Risk

When working at height the risk of an object falling from height must be considered, contractors must have a safe system of work in place to prevent injury from objects falling from heights. The risk to RMIT staff, students and members of the public from an object falling from height must be identified and controls put in place as determined by risk assessment.

### Methods that can be used to prevent objects from falling from height:

#### Solid Barriers

Solid barriers such as toe boards, infill panels and brick-guards can be used to stop objects from rolling or being kicked off the edge of platforms.

#### Covered Chutes

Covered chutes can be used to remove debris from the work area.

#### Tool Lanyards

Hand tools being used at height should have a secondary securing mechanism, such as a lanyard, which is attached either to the workman or to a fixed point adjacent to the work site.

Tools must be carried using a proper tool belt or other effective means to stop them from falling from level to another.

#### Housekeeping

Work platforms kept clear of loose materials are much less likely to present a risk from falling objects.

All loose and redundant tools and equipment should be removed once work tasks are completed.







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How to Manage the Risk	
HOC	Controls
<b>ELIMINATE</b> GET RID OF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design or workflow change to allow work at ground level</li> <li>Prefabricate prior to arrival on site</li> </ul>
<b>SUBSTITUTE</b> CHANGE/ REPLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use long handle tools, hand tools with lanyards to prevent falling objects</li> <li>Use of materials that do not require further preparation after installation</li> </ul>
<b>ISOLATE</b> SEPARATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical barriers as edge protection</li> <li>Physical barriers around drop zones as edge protection</li> <li>Fixed handrails either temporary or permanent</li> <li>Roof safety net /mesh to prevent falling object</li> </ul>
<b>ENGINEERING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scaffold fixed or mobile scaffold</li> <li>Elevated work platforms, scissor lifts or knuckle Boom</li> <li>Fixed covers over horizontal or vertical penetrations</li> <li>Self-closing doors on vertical penetration</li> </ul>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b> Instruction & signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working from a ladder</li> <li>Relying on verification of competency of workers ie scaffolders, EWP operators</li> <li>Work instruction and procedures</li> </ul>
<b>PPE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using anchor points designed and certified by an engineer and used in conjunction with a harness and fall arrest or travel restraint system</li> <li>Industrial Rope access systems</li> <li>Tool Lanyards</li> </ul>

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Figure 1: Tool Lanyard	Figure 2: Tool Lanyard	Figure 3: Tool Lanyard

For Additional Information.

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/compliance-code-prevention-falls-general-construction>  
<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/compliance-code-prevention-falls-housing-construction>