

Safety & Health Alert No. 22 / 2016 Use of Hand Tool with Hand Strap and Waist Gear

Date: 20 July 2016
Our Ref. : HD(C)TS 4/49/26

In March 2016, on a Housing Authority (HA) public rental housing development site, a hand tool fell from height and was dropped on a worker's head. His safety helmet was damaged and the injured worker was sent to hospital for operation after the accident. To prevent similar accidents on HA sites, contractors are strongly advised to take the following safety measures to avoid falling objects:-

- (a) Workers should use hand tools with hand straps and should put them in the waist gear or tool box or fix to personal protective gear when they are not in use ;
- (b) Before commencement of work, the following should be checked by the site safety supervisory staff :-
 - (i) Hand tools with hand straps have been properly stored inside tool boxes or fixed to personal protective gear;
 - (ii) Workers have worn reflective vest, safety helmet with y-type chin strap, non-slip safety shoes, and also waist gear and safety harness if they need to work at height.
- (c) According to the risk assessment report, the designated works area should be fenced off by barriers, together with warning notices, audio alarm warning system and a stand-by worker outside the designated works area is required to prevent unauthorized workers irrelevant to the works from entering the works area; and



- (d) A protective safety net should be installed on top of the works area to protect workers against falling objects. The safety net used should be in compliance with international standards ^{Note 1}.



Note 1 British Standard BS EN 1263-1:2014 - Safety nets, safety requirements, test methods and British Standard BS 8093:1991 - Code of Practice for the use of safety nets, containment nets and sheets on constructional works.