

Overview of proposed amendments to

Part 20: Construction, Excavation and Demolition Section 20.4, Safe access

Limited or restricted access to construction sites for workers delivering materials such as drywall, cabinets, bathroom fixtures and trusses often results in worker injury. Although section 4.33 states that a work area must be arranged to allow the safe movement of people, equipment and materials, this is typically viewed as a general requirement applying to fixed or permanent work areas and not a provision that applies during construction.

An amendment is proposed to section 20.4 to include a specific requirement for the provision of suitable access to and on a construction site to permit the safe delivery of equipment and material to the place where they will be used.

PART 20: CONSTRUCTION, EXCAVATION AND DEMOLITION

SAFE WORK AREAS AND SAFE ACCESS

- Safe access** **20.4** **(1)** Where practicable, suitable ladders, work platforms and scaffolds meeting the requirements of Part 13 (Ladders, Scaffolds and Temporary Work Platforms) must be provided for and used by a worker for activities requiring positioning at elevations above a floor or grade.
- (2) There must be suitable access for the safe delivery of equipment and materials to locations in the workplace where they will be used.**
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Explanatory Note

Suppliers of gypsum board have expressed concern about poor access to construction sites. In many cases, typically on wood frame residential construction sites, suppliers have difficulty obtaining safe access to all areas within the structure to which they must deliver gypsum board. As a result, workers often employ unsafe work practices and risk injury, including musculoskeletal injuries. It is recognized that the concerns regarding safe access, both to the inside and outside of a structure under construction, apply equally to the delivery of other materials such as appliances, bathroom fixtures, cabinets, and trusses.

In accordance with section 118 of the *Workers Compensation Act*, prime contractors are primarily responsible for ensuring that processes are in place to ensure compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* ("OHSR") on multi-employer worksites. This includes coordinating work arrangements, schedules and sub-trade activities to ensure compliance with sections 4.32 and 4.33 of the OHSR which require there be safe means to get to and from each place where work is performed and that work areas allow for the safe movement of people and materials. However, some prime contractors view sections 4.32 and 4.33 simply as general requirements and not as requirements to be addressed to ensure that safe access to and on a construction site is provided to accommodate the safe delivery of materials.

It is proposed that section 20.4 of the OHSR be amended by including a new subsection (2) to specifically address the need for adequate access at a construction site rather than rely on the general requirement established in sections 4.32 and 4.33. Proposed section 20.4 (2) requires that there be suitable access sufficient to allow for the safe delivery of equipment and materials. A guideline will provide examples of what constitutes adequate access at a construction site for the safe delivery of materials.

G20.4 Suitable access for safe delivery of equipment and materials

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Regulatory excerpt

Proposed section 20.4(2) of the *OHS Regulation* states:

There must be suitable access for the safe delivery of equipment and materials to locations in the workplace where they will be used.

Purpose of guideline

This guideline provides examples of “equipment and materials” under proposed section 20.4(2) of the *OHS Regulation*, discusses coordination among workplace parties, and provides examples of safe delivery, interior access, and material handling practices.

“Equipment and materials” under section 20.4(2)

Examples of equipment and materials delivered to building construction sites include but are not limited to drywall, appliances, cabinets, concrete, powered concrete finishing equipment and trusses. Examples of equipment and materials delivered to road and municipal services construction sites include but are not limited to pipes, hydrants, valves, manhole sections and portable powered compactors.

Coordination

Prime contractors, owners, employers, supervisors, sub-contractors, and delivery companies all have responsibilities, and must work together to plan and ensure that suitable access is maintained for safe delivery to locations where equipment and materials will be used. See: [Part 3 Division 3](#) of the *Workers Compensation Act* for general duties of employers (s. 115), workers (s. 116), supervisors (s. 117), owners (s. 119), and prime contractors (s. 118).

Recommended planning activities include the following.

- Developing company and site policy and safe work practices for delivering materials and equipment.
- Pre-planning the project to provide sufficient clear access points to the site to allow for the safe delivery of equipment and materials.
- Coordinating delivery times with delivery companies.

Safe delivery practices

The following practices, where applicable, can help ensure that materials and equipment are delivered safely.

- Clear ground access for telescoping boom forklifts or boom trucks, ensuring the area is
 - free of overhead hazards, such as power lines, and
 - graded and stabilized to provide a solid compacted soil surface or properly shored concrete slab.
- Maintain access routes to allow equipment to safely maneuver.
- Allow for several locations where materials can be delivered to a floor area.
- Make available access openings large enough to safely accommodate passing materials from the boom truck/forklift into the structure.

Proposed OHS Guideline Part 20 Construction, Excavation and Demolition

- Minimize manual handling by using boom trucks, lift trucks or similar material handling equipment to deliver materials and equipment as close as possible to the location where they will be used. Provide sufficient clear access for the material handling equipment.
- Eliminate, where practicable, situations where workers manually handle large or heavy items on stairs.
Note: Section [4.50](#) of the *OHS Regulation* specifies the controls that are required to eliminate, if practicable, or minimize the risk of musculoskeletal injuries.
- Provide guardrail protection and/or anchor points on the structure at wall openings and balconies to enable workers to use appropriate fall protection when transferring materials from the boom truck/forklift into the structure (see also the requirements for fall protection under [Part 11](#) and guardrails under sections [4.58](#) and [4.58.1](#)).
- Install one or more windows temporarily on the inside of the wall to allow easy removal of the window. If windows are not large enough or accessible for the delivery of materials create a temporary access hatch at suitable locations in walls.

Safe interior access practices

Examples of safe interior access practices include the following.

- Distribute materials so that the floor in any area is not loaded beyond the permissible floor loadings.
- Where appropriate, ensure there is sufficient access through framed walls inside the building; for example, ensure that plumbing and electrical wiring runs do not impede workers from carrying materials, such as wallboard, between wall studs to adjacent rooms.
- Use guardrails to accommodate the safe movement of materials on stairways (see also the requirements for guards and guardrails under sections [4.58](#) and [4.58.1](#)).
- Put in place stairs leading down to the basement before the delivery of materials to the basement, or if there is no access to the basement, designate areas on the floor where materials can be lowered.
- Clear hallways and stairs of debris and equipment that may cause slipping and tripping hazards.

Appropriate material handling equipment

Ensure material handling equipment, such as boom trucks, rough terrain cranes, forklifts, and telescoping boom lifts, are suitable for use on the site terrain and have sufficient reach and capacity to handle the equipment and materials to the location where workers can safely handle materials and equipment manually.

Note: Section 4.3 of the *OHS Regulation* provides that the employer must ensure that each piece of equipment in the workplace is capable of safely performing the functions for which it is used, and selected, used and operated in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and instructions, if available, safe work practices, and the requirements of the *OHS Regulation*.