

Formwork—Stripping forms

These are some injuries that workers have experienced while stripping formwork.

1. A worker strained the tendon in his left forearm while stripping and moving forms.
2. A worker fell six feet from a scaffold platform and severely injured his leg.
3. A worker was struck by a piece of plywood, which hit his hard hat and twisted his head.

Explain dangers

Formwork stripping is one of the most dangerous operations in concrete work.

Hazards can include the following.

FALLS

- Panels and other materials could fall and strike workers during stripping.
- Stacked materials could fall and strike workers.
- Workers could fall when formwork breaks free or if forms are being stripped at dangerous heights.
- Materials could fall to lower levels and injure workers or pedestrians.
- Poor housekeeping can cause slips and trips.

STRUCK-BYS

- Workers could be struck by loose concrete, rubble, debris, or over-pour left on columns, walls, and other structures. These hazards could also result in eye injuries.
- Sharp edges on formwork, protruding nails, snap ties, conduit, and bolts can cause pinches, cuts, scrapes, abrasions, and other injuries.
- Protruding rebar can cause cuts, abrasions, and impalement.

MSDs

- Workers can injure their joints, muscles, and bones from reaching, prying, pulling, pushing, lifting, and carrying heavy forms, panels, and other components.

Identify controls

- Maintain signs and barriers to prohibit unauthorized entry into the stripping area.
- Ensure that exposed rebar is properly capped to avoid cuts, abrasions, and impalement.
- If guardrails must be removed, make sure everyone working in the area uses a fall protection system. Don't take shortcuts.
- Only strip what you can clean up during the same work shift.
- Ensure bracing is sufficient before breaking formwork from concrete.
- Never climb partially stripped formwork to reach high areas. Use a work platform.
- Make sure that work platforms are fully planked and have proper guardrails—including toe boards—for work over 2.4 metres. Planks for work platforms less than 2.4 metres high must be at least 460 millimeters wide.
- Never lean material against the wall. Place it neatly on the ground in a stable position.
- Never throw stripped material to the ground from a work platform. Always lower it by passing it to a co-worker or using another safe method.
- Ensure the stripping area is clean to avoid slips and trips. Inspect columns, walls, and other structures and remove any loose concrete or debris.
- When stripping, always wear gloves and safety eyewear to protect against cuts, pinches, scrapes, and injuries from debris.
- Never alter tools.
- Use carts or cradles to move material.
- Never strip forms unless you have verified that the concrete strength is sufficient.

Demonstrate

Take the crew to an area where stripping will be done. Highlight some of the hazards and identify the controls that will be used, such as signs and barriers, methods for lowering material, and proper stacking and storage of stripped material.