



Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety Unit

OH&S Alert!

December 2009

Operators of heavy plant and machinery

Are you on safe ground?

Operators of all types of mobile plant and machinery need to check they are on safe ground before setting up.

Recent accidents highlight the dangers of setting up heavy machinery on unstable ground.



Concrete pump

The accident that killed concreter Thomas Kelly on the Pentridge Jail site was caused when one of the outriggers on a mobile concrete pump sank into deep mud. The outrigger was also positioned directly over an underground drainage pipe.



Mobile crane

These pictures show the result of a mobile crane setting up and operating on uncompacted ground.

The crane tipped over despite only lifting a 400kg load.

In both instances sole boards were in place to distribute weight, but this is not sufficient to prevent tipping over if the ground beneath is not solid and stable.

Remember!

- Do not set up plant and machinery on ground that has been disturbed recently.
- Do not set up over underground drainage pipes and services.
- Always take extra caution when setting up following rain. Ground that was safe in the past may have become unstable.
- If in doubt about ground condition, don't set up there.
- It is strongly recommended that a soil compactus test is conducted if there is any doubt about the stability of the ground.

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Authorised by Bill Oliver, Secretary, Tommy Watson and John Setka, Assistant Secretaries of the CFMEU Construction and General Division.

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