

# Preventing injury during plasterboard handling



## Safety Bulletin 20

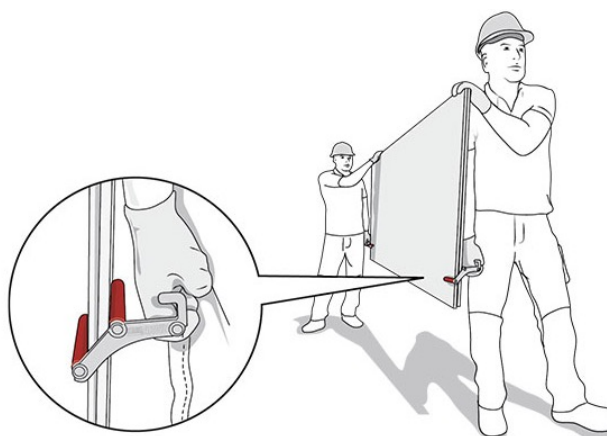
Reducing downtime caused by manual handling injuries on site. This document follows guidance by HSE with regards to the safe lifting and movement of plasterboard. Following the guidance is not compulsory, however if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. HSE inspectors may refer to the HSE guidance when ensuring compliance with the law. HSE now recovers the cost of time spent dealing with breaches of health and safety law via Fee for Intervention. This will occur when an inspector finds something wrong that they believe is serious enough for them to write to you about. Following HSE guidance may help you avoid a fee.

**This document offers advice that you should follow, even if you don't directly employ the people working for you on site.**

### Examples of lifting equipment for the movement and fixing of plasterboards



- Ensure that the site is organised and materials are delivered as close as possible where they need to be.
- Use pallet trucks / board trollies to move materials around site
- Use plasterboard lifts or props to position boards safely during the fixing process
- In tight spaces or on stairwells where lifting aids can't be used, use smaller size boards that are easier to handle
- Move away from 'price work' payment. These encourage workers to rush, overstretch themselves and not to use lifting equipment, which increases the risk of injury.
- Create loading bays across the site so that large plasterboards do not need to be carried through doorways or up stairs
- When lifting equipment is provided, ensure that the workers are trained in its use. Also train the workers in safe lifting techniques and manual handling
- Ensure that when purchasing plasterboards that the weights are identified on the boards for the operatives to see



Plasterboards are difficult to grip when carrying, this can cause poor posture and risks injury. Using grip handles enables better posture and reduces the likelihood of the board being dropped.

The use of pallet trucks / board trollies allows plasterboards to be moved around site, it reduces the requirement to stoop through doorways and reduces strain on the body. It is also faster for moving boards around site as multiple boards can be moved at one time. Care must be taken to ensure that the board trolley is not overloaded and that operatives do not trap themselves between the trolley and the walls.



The fixing of plasterboards to ceiling can cause manual handling injuries caused by the strain of lifting plasterboard above their head. Using a panel lifter supports the plasterboard allowing one person to fix the plasterboard with better posture and reducing the strain on their body.

**Remember, you (the Employer, Management, Supervisors) have a duty not only to protect your own health and safety and the health and safety of your workforce but you must also to ensure that your actions do not put others around you at risk.**