

Glass Safety

Did you know that many buildings constructed prior to the 1990's do not use Safety Glass?

Although, the Building Code of Australia has required safety glass installations in both new and renovated properties since the 90's, many older buildings are likely to have a substantial amount of plate glass installed in areas where impact could occur.

Several public liability claims have resulted from injuries sustained by persons coming into contact with shattered plate glass.

The victims of plate glass injuries are often left with horrific scars that can leave them both physically and psychologically damaged following the incident.

It is important that Catholic entities, particularly schools and colleges, identify whether or not their buildings contain plate glass and implement risk controls to eliminate or reduce the risk of plate glass injuries occurring within their organisation.

Under state and territory Occupational Health and Safety legislation, employers are required to maintain a safe workplace. Organisations are also obliged under common law to provide a duty of care and prevent foreseeable risks from occurring.

The implementation of a risk management program to manage glass safety can assist organisations in upholding their common law obligations and increasing their compliance with state or territory Occupational Health and Safety legislation.

Taking a risk management approach to glass safety

Inspect buildings to identify non-safety glass. Glass without a safety glass label embedded into it is likely to be non-safety glass. Where there are no markings, assume that the glass is not safety glass. Alternatively engage a competent glazier to inspect glass for compliance with AS 1288 - 2006.

Priority should be given to identify non-safety glass at low levels (for school, colleges and childcare, aged care and nursing homes) and in areas where glass can be impacted such as thoroughfares or sporting areas.

Following the glass hazard inspection, conduct a risk assessment of the non-safety glass or other glass hazards taking into consideration the consequence and likelihood of an injury occurring.

Example: Glass safety risks:

Hazard	Risk	Risk ranking
Fractured/ chipped glass	Glass breakage	Medium - high
Low level plate glass and/or plate glass doors at school	Students put body parts through glass	High risk

Risk controls

- Develop and implement a staged plan to replace plate glass with safety glass over a period of time, prioritizing the glass at most risk of impact.
- Allocate sufficient resources within your annual budget to replace glass that does not comply with the AS 1288-2006 Glass in buildings - Selection and installation.
- Prioritise the replacement of non-safety glass at low levels that could be impacted upon e.g. in high traffic and high activity areas. The AS 1288-2006 states that for primary and secondary schools as well as early childhood centres "glazing within 1000mm of the floor or ground shall be "A" grade safety glass" and for aged care buildings and nursing homes, "framed and partly unframed glazing within 1500mm of ground or floor shall be "A" grade safety glass".

- For low risk glass that could be subject to impact, as an interim measure, protect the glass by installing a barrier or apply an appropriate plastic film to the glass surface.
- Engage a competent glazier to install and/or replace glass in accordance and AS 1288-2006 and AS 2208-1996.
- Ensure all glass is clearly visible. For existing glass, apply opaque bands, motifs, stickers or other permanent markers to glass at an appropriate level to identify the presence of the glass where required.
- Develop a plan to minimise traffic in high risk areas in the interim e.g. encourage sporting activities in open areas away from glass.
- Ensure any broken glass is cordoned off, made safe and replaced within 24 hours.
- Include glass in your regular proactive building inspections.

Monitoring and review

Monitor and review risk controls at regular intervals to ascertain effectiveness and amend controls if deemed inadequate.

Further resources

The Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB)

via their website: www.abcb.gov.au

Standards Australia Limited

www.standards.org.au

Relevant standards, regulations and acts

- AS 1288-2006 Glass in buildings - Selection and installation
- AS 2208-1996 Safety Glazing materials in Buildings
- Relevant State or Territory Occupational Health and Safety Acts and Regulations
- Wrongs Act 1958

Risk Management Helpdesk

For further information and assistance on glass safety or to obtain a copy of our glass safety checklist, please contact the Risk Management helpdesk on **1300 660 827**.

To discuss your insurance options, please contact your Account Executive on **1800 011 028**.

**For assistance with risk management please call
the Risk Management Helpdesk on**

1300 660 827

www.ccinsurances.com.au

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