



# Hazard Alert

*Topic Summary:*

## Fatal Hazard – Granite and Marble Transport Racks

**Employers:** Protect yourself and your workers. Overloading storage racks used to transport granite and marble slabs can cause serious injuries and death. Transporting these slabs on damaged storage racks will increase the likelihood of a serious accident. Please share this important information with your employees.

- On March 22, 2004, an employee of a trucking company was seriously injured while he was preparing to unload several granite slabs that were loaded on his flat bed truck. The rack holding the slabs collapsed, causing the granite slabs to fall over. The slabs shattered and several pieces of the granite struck the employee.
- On May 12, 2004, an employee was killed when the granite slabs he was attempting to unload from a flatbed trailer fell over, pinning him and another employee between the slabs and the truck. Fire and rescue crews had to use inflatable jacks to lift the slabs off of the two employees.

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### How do I protect my workers and myself?

#### **Inspect the storage racks prior to loading.**

The first step is to inspect the storage rack before any granite or marble slab is loaded. Look for areas that show the rack has been damaged or overloaded:

- Cracked welds
- Cracked structural members
- Deformed or bent structural members
- Splits in wooden supports

Check to see if any repairs or modifications have been done to the storage rack. Do the repairs or modifications appear to be structurally sound and capable of safely holding a load of several thousand pounds?

#### **Don't allow your employees to use damaged storage racks.**

Storage racks that are or could be damaged must not be used. Placing a load on a damaged storage rack creates a hazard to any employee who will be involved in the transport of the slabs – the employees loading the slabs, anyone who transports the slabs, and finally, the employees who unload the slabs at their final destination.

Both of the accidents mentioned above occurred as the employees were attempting to unload the slabs at their final destinations.

#### **Keep employees clear while loading or unloading the granite and marble slabs.**

These granite and marble slabs are extremely heavy and difficult to handle, even with powered material-handling equipment. During the loading and unloading phase, it is important to make sure

the storage rack is secured and will not move. Workers must stay well clear of the area around the storage racks while any material-handling equipment is loading or unloading the slabs onto the racks.

## **How can I get help from Labor and Industries?**

The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) has assistance available at no charge by going to [Request Consultation](#).

### **Online Resources**

WISHA Safety and Health regulations: [Find Safety & Health Rules](#)

Other rules may apply.

\*WISHA: Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act, the state equivalent of OSHA.

L&I's Division of Occupational Safety & Health (DOSHS) administers the workplace safety and health regulations.