

Work Safe Bulletin

Double Pan/Float/Trowels on Suspended Slabs

The Cement Finishing Labour Relations Association is an Ontario not-for-profit ICI employer organization whose purpose includes the promotion of safe work planning and practices.

The purpose of this document is to provide specific hazard information and promote discussion of safe work practices.

This bulletin does not contain a full analysis of the law, nor does it constitute a legal opinion. The CFLRA is not liable for any damages resulting from the use of this information.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 289-837-1627 or by e-mail at safety@cflra.ca

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July 22, 2016

Background:

Double pan/float/trowel machines are used in elevated slab construction to achieve flatter floor surfaces.

Hazard Concern:

Guardrails may not be strong enough to stop the travel of this equipment when in full motion. Protrusions from the slab may catch the trowel or float edge and cause the machine to kick-back.



Operational Procedure Considerations:

Each project has unique characteristics that require careful consideration. It is strongly recommended that this issue be discussed at the preconstruction meeting with your safety representative. To reduce the possibility of an incident, it is recommended that the following be considered:

1. Follow the equipment manufacturers operating instructions at all times.
2. Only trained Concrete Finishers should operate a double trowel finishing machine.
3. It is very important that the “dead-man” switch be checked prior to starting work each day (the machine should stop quickly upon its release).
4. A “no-ride” zone should be considered which minimizes or eliminates the operation of the double trowel near slab edges and large slab openings. Single trowel machines should be used to perform finishing operations in this “no ride” zone (see WSB Single Trowels on Elevated Slabs).
5. The operator should approach the slab edge or “no-ride” zone at an angle of approximately 45° or less (whenever possible).
6. The operator should not reverse towards the slab edge or slab opening at any time.
7. The operator should reduce the speed of the double trowel machine as it approaches the slab edge or slab opening. The speed of the trowel machine shall be moderated as necessary to allow for the safe operation of the double trowel machine.
8. The operator shall not be tied to, or restrained by, the equipment.

Further references:

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act.](#)
- [Ontario Regulation for Construction Projects.](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 833 Control & Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents.](#)
- [Infrastructure Health & Safety Association](#)