

Hook it, pin it, double check it

true stories



Falls from walk boards are common sources of injuries to movers. Slips caused by rain are hard to prevent. But when a walk board itself fails, injuring a worker, the incident is negligent, unnecessary, and avoidable.

Here are some painful and expensive examples:

- A 42-year-old driver was transferring household goods from one truck to another. Just as he noticed the walk board was unstable (because there was not enough overlap), it fell while he was on it. His knee was injured at a cost of over \$25,000.
- When they arrived at the job, a 51-year-old old mover was dismayed to realize his supervisor had only brought a fractured span board instead of a ramp for the unload. They were at a remote location so the supervisor insisted he use the span board because it was too far to go back to get the correct equipment. The board fell while he was off-loading, shattering his heel. After a year, he still can't return to work.
- A combination of factors injured a 30-year-old mover. The truck driver had parked the truck at an odd angle and refused to reposition it to make it more level, causing the walk board to be at an odd angle. Additionally, the walk board was not pinned to the trailer. When the mover stepped onto the walk board, he heard a noise and felt it start to slide. He tried to back off the walk board but couldn't react quickly enough. His hand and knee were injured in the fall. He lost over two months of work.

Tips to Live By

WORKERS

- Make sure the correct ramps and walk boards are loaded before each job.
- Inspect the walk board before use to ensure that it has not been damaged and is set up properly.
- Frequently check that there is sufficient tread on the soles of your shoes and that they are clear of soil, oil, or any substance that may cause you to slip.
- Walk with slow, deliberate steps on wet walk boards.
- If you're not sure, ask.

EMPLOYERS

- Include walk board pins in your inventory process before each job.
- Each time you hire workers, fully train them on proper methods and how to communicate in team lifts before sending them out.
- Replace missing pins and worn walk boards promptly.