News Release

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FGIA Annual Conference Safety Presentation Covers Safe Glass Handling, Processing

SCHAUMBURG, IL – A safety session at the Fenestration and Glazing Industry Alliance (FGIA) 2023 Annual Conference focused on the importance of proper glass handling and processing. Sponsored by the association’s [Fenestration Safety Committee](https://fgiaonline.org/committees/FENSAFETY), Bill Davis ([Vitro Architectural Glass](https://www.vitroglazings.com/)) presented “Glass Handling and Processing Safety” at the conference and reminded participants not to become complacent about potential dangers. “You may think you have handled glass a thousand times, but hazards are still there,” Davis said. “You can get comfortable working with glass and that can make you forget those hazards. Don't get too comfortable.”

Davis shared his company’s philosophy of having a foundation formed on trust, teamwork and shared excitement. “These core values begin in the safety arena,” he said. “And obviously a fatal accident would be incredibly devastating.”

**Injuries from Broken Glass**

The [Occupational Safety & Health Administration](https://www.osha.gov/) (OSHA) website shows 92 pages of results for “broken glass” injuries, Davis demonstrated. This includes annealed, heat strengthened or tempered glass, used mostly in architectural applications. “The first two have a high risk of laceration from broken glass,” said Davis. “The last usually evacuates the opening when broken. Lacerations from broken annealed or heat strengthened glass can be severe or even fatal.”

The U.S. Safety Standard for Architectural Glazing Materials, ANSI z97 (2015) requires all safety glazing to be labeled with a permanent logo that includes the fabricator’s name and the safety standard to which it is certified, Davis said. “This applies to both laminated safety glass and fully tempered safety glass,” he explained. “Without the logo, the product is not compliant with the federal regulation and is not considered safety glazing.”

**The Importance of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Davis offered several tips for PPE:

* Always wear glass handling gear correctly for maximum protection.
* Be sure to zipper your jacket and Velcro close the collar.
* Check that new gloves are the correct ANSI rating.

“Glass handling PPE is critical,” he said. “I see this violation a lot: unzipped jackets in hot plants.” The neck is a critical area of the body with major blood vessels. Many fatal glass incidents occurred because the worker was cut in the neck, stated Davis.

**Moving and Disposing of Glass**

Plants can prevent impact or crush injuries with proper glass handling. If using a cart or rack, ensure glass is secure to prevent it from falling, said Davis. Whenever possible, push carts rather than pull them. “This provides more balance, power and control.”

When automated glass handling equipment is available, it is best to use it, according to Davis. “Never try to adjust glass when it is being moved or processed by automated equipment. Use approved glass handling lifting equipment and other assets whenever provided.”

Finally, safely disposing of glass is crucial. “When discarding glass, carefully place it in hoppers,” said Davis. “Cut large pieces into smaller sections, especially long, narrow trim pieces.”

**Safety Resources**

In his concluding remarks, Davis referred participants to the resources in the new [FGIA Safety Library](https://fgiaonline.org/news/fgia-launches-new-safety-library), which houses several online presentations. Member login is required.

For more information about FGIA and its activities, visit [FGIAonline.org](https://fgiaonline.org/).

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