

# Safety Alert

16 August 2024

Let's work together to keep ourselves and our workers safe.

## Fatal digger accident

A worker was operating a 30-tonne excavator to remove woody debris from along the banks of the Waimata River when the digger tipped over into the river.

Frantic rescue efforts were made by other contractors, who swam to the digger to try to free the trapped driver from his submerged cab but unfortunately, despite their commendable attempts, they were unsuccessful.

The MinEx booklet [Alluvial Gold Code of Practice](#) contains guidance on excavators working near bodies of water.

[MinEx statistics](#) on incidents with the potential to cause harm over the past 6 years show 16% of incidents (1,007 incidents) involve falls of which 383 result from fall of equipment.



### You need to ensure that:

1. You check the nature and stability of the ground and physical dimensions of a working bench before operating a digger.
2. Cabs of excavators have a glass hammer to break the glass in event of an emergency.
3. Seat belts are not used when excavating in or around water bodies.
4. Life vests are available in the cab of excavators working in or around water.

**Know of an incident or near miss? Please share the learnings with us.**