

# RE-ROLLED GUARDRAILS THE HIDDEN DANGERS



**SANS 1350 Compliant Guardrail**

Guardrails are one of the most critical safety features on our roads. They are designed, manufactured, and tested to strict standards to ensure they perform as intended in a collision — protecting drivers, passengers, and pedestrians. Any alteration to that design or structure puts lives at risk.

One particularly dangerous practice is the re-rolling of guardrails. At first glance, re-rolling may appear to be a way to salvage or reuse steel, but this process seriously compromises safety and is illegal in South Africa.

## Why Re-Rolling is a Problem?

### ■ Loss of Original Properties

Steel that has been deformed and reformed is unlikely to retain its original strength and impact-resistance properties. Guardrails are specifically engineered for safety; re-rolling disrupts these characteristics.

### ■ Compromised Galvanising

Guardrails are galvanised to prevent corrosion. Re-rolling damages this protective coating, leaving the steel vulnerable to rust and weakening over time.

### ■ Material Thinning and Elongation

Re-rolling can stretch and thin the steel in places, creating weak points along the length of the rail. These inconsistencies can cause unpredictable failures in collisions.

### ■ Failure to Meet Standards

Even if tested, re-rolled guardrails are unlikely to meet the stringent standards required for road safety in South Africa.

## Liability and Safety Risk

Endorsing or using re-rolled guardrails carries enormous liability. Should a failure occur, the responsibility falls directly on those who authorised or installed the non-compliant product. More importantly, the risk is borne by road users, whose lives depend on these safety systems.

## Conclusion

Road safety is non-negotiable. The dangers of re-rolling guardrails far outweigh any perceived benefits. Beyond being unsafe, the practice is illegal under South African standards. Only properly manufactured, accredited, and compliant guardrails should be installed on roads — because every life saved counts.

## LEGAL REQUIREMENT



The COTO Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Works for South African Road Authorities explicitly prohibits re-rolling of guardrails: “*Damaged guardrails should not be used or retrofitted. **Re-rolling of guardrails shall not be permitted.***” (Clause 11.4.7.3b, COTO 11.4)

This means that using re-rolled guardrails is not only unsafe but also illegal, reinforcing the responsibility of contractors and authorities to only use compliant, accredited systems.



**Damaged Guardrail**