



## Work Safety Alert Fire Broken Out inside a Godown under Demolition

1. **Date of Accident :** November 2021
2. **Place of Accident :** A demolition site
3. **Summary :**

A fire broke out on the basement floor of a godown under demolition where flame cutting process was being conducted. Three workers who were working on the same floor and an upper floor were overcome by the dense smoke emitted from the fire. One of them passed away in hospital on the same day and the other two were injured.

### 4. **Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Proprietors :**

To ensure the safety of workers/ employees engaged in demolition work where hot work such as welding or flame cutting is involved, the contractors/ proprietors should provide and maintain a safe system of work which should include, but not limited to, the following:

- appointing a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments to identify all potential hazards associated with the work, in particular the fire hazard that may be caused by the flame, heat, hot slag or sparks emitted/ produced in the process, taking into account the presence of demolished materials that may easily catch fire;
- formulating safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of the risk assessments and following the requirements of safety legislation, relevant codes of practice and safety guidelines;
- prohibiting any hot work conducted in the vicinity of flammable/ combustible materials as it poses high risk of fire;



- where hot work is to be carried out in the workplace, ensuring the following precautions have been taken to prevent outbreak of fire:
  - keeping the work area clean and tidy. Moving all flammable or combustible materials to a safe place away from the work area. When the flammable or combustible materials cannot be moved away from possible contact with flame, heat, hot slag or sparks so emitted/ produced, taking suitable measures, such as covering them with fire resistant materials as protection;
  - ensuring that the adjacent areas or compartments, which may be affected by the heat generated by the operation, are free from flammable or combustible materials and fire hazards. Removing or protecting the flammable or combustible materials as appropriate;
  - ensuring that the workplace is free from any flammable or combustible materials, such as oil, grease, paint, polystyrene foam, dirt or other residue before the commencement of the hot work;
  - providing suitable fire-fighting equipment such as fire extinguishers, buckets of sand nearby the work area;
- devising, implementing and maintaining a fire warning system, fire procedures and an emergency response plan so that all workers/ employees could safely evacuate from the workplace in case of fire;
- providing all workers/ employees involved with necessary safety information, instruction and training and ensuring that they are familiar with the safe working procedures, safety measures and emergency response plan; and
- establishing and implementing an effective monitoring and control system to ensure that all safety measures are strictly followed.



## 5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Code of Practice: Safety and Health at Work for Gas Welding and Flame Cutting](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Guidance Notes on Fire Safety at Workplaces](#)<sup>1</sup>

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### DISCLAIMER

This Work Safety Alert (“the Alert”) is issued at the earliest possible opportunity after a serious accident with a view to drawing the attention of interested parties to the general safety precautionary measures necessary to protect people engaging in similar work activities. The material contained in the Alert constitutes general guidance only. It does not reduce, limit, or replace, any legal obligations upon any person to comply with any statutory duties under relevant legislation. Users such as Managers and Supervisors should make their own evaluation of the information contained in the Alert to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices. The Labour Department does NOT accept any responsibilities for any loss or damage resulting from the use of or failure to use of the information on the Alert.

Note: The material contained in the Alert is not exhaustive, and will be supplemented/ adjusted where necessary if more relevant information comes to light.

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<sup>1</sup> Click to view document