5 Work-above-ground Safety

- Ladders are designed for the purpose of access and egress and should not be used for work-above-ground as the ladders may topple or the workers may fall down during work.

- Use suitable working platforms such as mobile working platforms, step platforms and hop-up platforms for work-above-ground.

- For the work-above-ground activities carried out near permanent railings or parapets, contractors and employers shall take adequate steps, including providing and ensuring that workers use suitable working platforms, personal fall protection system, etc.

6 Electrical Work Safety

- Electrical work should be carried out by qualified registered electrical workers (commonly known as “registered electricians”).

- Take effective measures to ensure the safe isolation of electricity source and avoid carrying out live work.

- Remember to switch off, lock up and post notice.

7 Fire Safety

- Do not carry out work processes that may cause ignition when flammable substances (such as thinner and floor lacquer) are in use.

- Keep good ventilation when flammable substances are in use.

- Store flammable substances properly.

Enquiries and Complaints

If you wish to enquire about this leaflet or require advice on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) matters, please contact the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the Labour Department (LD) through:

Telephone: 2559 2297
(auto-recording service available outside office hours)
Fax: 2915 1410
Email: enquiry@labour.gov.hk

Information on the services offered by LD and on major labour legislation is also available on our website at www.labour.gov.hk.

For details on the services offered by the Occupational Safety and Health Council, please call 2739 9000.

If you have any complaint about unsafe operations and environments at workplaces, please call the LD’s OSH complaint hotline at 2542 2172 or fill out and submit an online OSH complaint form on our website. All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Online OSH Complaint Form

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY FOR REPAIR, MAINTENANCE, ALTERATION AND ADDITION WORKS

SAFETY HINTS FOR OWNERS AND TENANTS OF COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL UNITS

If accidents involving casualties occur in a unit in the course of repair, maintenance, alteration and addition (RMAA) works,

- the works involved will be delayed as a result.
- the owners/tenants will be emotionally disturbed.
- claims may arise and the owners/tenants may also be held liable.
- the property value may be adversely affected.
Occupational Safety for RMAA Works in a Unit

Owners/tenants of individual units may carry out various types of RMAA works. Some of the works may involve higher-risk work processes such as work-at-height and electrical wiring. Examples include window replacement, drainage works and replacement of air-conditioners. Accidents involving such works occur from time to time. Accidents or serious/fatal incidents arising from failure to take proper safety measures not only endanger the safety and health of workers, but also affect the owners/tenants involved to a certain extent.

Occupational safety hints on common RMAA works are summarised below:

1. Safety Training and Insurance for Workers

   - Workers must have received mandatory basic safety training for the construction industry and obtained a valid certificate (commonly known as “Safety Card” or “Green Card”).

   - Before the commencement of works, request the contractor to produce a valid insurance policy taken out under the Employees’ Compensation Ordinance for inspection.

   - It is against the law not to have a valid Safety Card/Green Card or a valid insurance policy.

2. Wear Safety Helmets with Chin Straps Fastened

   - Workers must wear safety helmets with the chin straps fastened during works for maximum head protection and to prevent accidental displacement or loosening of the safety helmets during the work or when falling from height, thereby minimising the harm to the head when a worker falls.

3. Safety for Work-at-Height on External Walls

   - Suitable working platforms must be used for work-at-height on external walls. Those commonly used are truss-out scaffolds.

   - In view of the varied designs of buildings, professional advice should be sought when necessary to provide and ensure the use of suitable working platforms by workers.

4. Work Safety for Bamboo Scaffolds

   - Scaffold erection, dismantling and alteration shall be carried out by trained workers with adequate experience under the immediate supervision of a competent person. The competent person is not at the time himself or herself actively engaged in such work and is free to look to the safe condition of the scaffold and the safety of the workers without being distracted by having to mind his or her own safety.

   - Workers must wear a safety harness which is attached to: (i) a secure anchorage; or (ii) an independent lifeline with a fall arrester when carrying out scaffold erection, dismantling and alteration works or working on a truss-out scaffold.

   - Provide suitable and adequate safe means of access to and egress from the scaffold.

   - Provide suitable working platforms for workers to work on.

   - Each metal bracket supporting the truss-out scaffold must be fixed with 3 or more anchor bolts.

   - A scaffold is not used unless it has been inspected and issued with a report (Form 5) signed by a competent person before being taken into use for the first time and at intervals not exceeding 14 days immediately preceding each use of it.

   - Select safety-conscious contractors (such as those accredited as “OSH Star Enterprise”) to safeguard work safety. Regarding the “OSH Star Enterprise” list, please visit the Occupational Safety and Health Council’s website at http://www.oshc.org.hk.