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.

Confined Space Work Safety

- Before carrying out confined space work, appoint a competent person to conduct a task-specific risk assessment.
- Ensure that all safety measures set out in the risk assessment report are fully implemented and strictly followed.
- Implement a permit-to-work system.
- Ensure that only certified workers are allowed to work in a confined space.
- Ensure that a person is stationed outside the confined space to maintain communication with the workers inside.

Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work

- Shelter the workplace if practicable.
- Reschedule outdoor work to cooler periods.
- Avoid prolonged working in a hot environment.
- Provide fans or blowers at workplaces or rest areas if reasonably practicable.
- Provide sufficient potable water to workers or at locations in close proximity to the workers.
- Wear suitable clothing such as wide-brimmed hats, thin, air permeable and light-colored clothing.

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.

Other Useful Information

- Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety
- Code of Practice for Metal Scaffolding Safety
- 安全建議：竹腳手架安全使用
- Safety Guide for Bamboo Scaffolding Work
- 「腳架」式腳手架安全須知
- Safety Measures for Use of Truss-out Bamboo Scaffold
- Guidance Notes on Classification and Use of Safety Belts and their Anchorage Systems
- Code of Practice for Safe Use and Operation of Suspended Working Platforms
- Code of Practice for Safety and Health at Work in Confined Spaces
- Guidance Notes on Fire Safety at Workplaces
- Guidance Notes on the Selection, Use and Maintenance of Safety Helmets
- Guidance Notes for the Safe Isolation of Electricity Source at Work
- Chemical Safety in the Workplace - Guidance Notes on Safe Use of Flammable Liquids
- Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work in a Hot Environment

Enquiries and Complaints

If you wish to enquire about this leaflet or require advice on occupational safety and health matters, please contact the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the Labour Department:

Telephone: 2592 2977
Auto-recording service available outside office hours
Fax: 2915 1410
E-mail: enquiry@labour.gov.hk

Information on the services offered by the Labour Department and on major labour legislation is also available on our website at http://www.labour.gov.hk. If you have any complaints about unsafe workplaces and work practices, please call the Labour Department’s occupational safety and health complaint hotline at 2342 2712. All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Safety Hints for Contractors and Workers

Contractors often undertake repair, maintenance, alteration and addition works of commercial and residential properties. Some of the works may involve higher-risk work processes such as work at height, use of flammable substances and electrical wiring. Examples include the repair and cleaning of external walls and internal parts of a building, repair and replacement of sewers or water mains, and electrical works.

Accidents or serious/fatal incidents arising from failure to take proper safety measures and supervise and control work safety of sub-contractors not only violate the relevant occupational safety and health legislation, but also affect the works progress. Contractors may even be held liable in respect of the relevant litigations and claims.

Workers must also fully co-operate with employers and contractors, comply with the occupational safety and health legislation, use equipment/tools and wear personal protective equipment properly to avoid accidents.
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”).

- A valid insurance policy must be taken out for directly employed workers under the Employees’ Compensation Ordinance.

- Before the commencement of works, request the sub-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 Safety for Work at Height on External Walls

- Suitable working platforms must be used for work at height on external walls. Those commonly used include:
  1. bamboo scaffolds
  2. truss-out bamboo scaffolds
  3. metal scaffolds
  4. suspended working platforms
  5. elevating work platforms

- 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.

- Bamboo scaffolds and truss-out scaffolds are often used for work at height on external walls. The erection, dismantling and alteration of such scaffolds shall be carried out by trained workers with adequate experience under the supervision of a competent person.

- Workers must wear a safety harness which is attached to (a) a secure anchorage or (b) 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.

- Secure support such as bracings, I-shaped metal brackets or truss-out metal brackets should be provided for a truss-out scaffold. Each metal bracket supporting the truss-out scaffold must be fixed with 3 or more anchor bolts.

- Provide suitable working platforms for workers to work on.

3 Work-above-ground Safety

- Ladders are designed for the purpose of access and egress and should not be used for work above ground.

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

- Supervise and control sub-contractors and workers to ensure the equipment/tools brought by them for use meet the safety requirements.

- 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.

4 Bamboo scaffold

- A scaffold is not used unless it has been inspected and issued with a report (Form S) 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 sub-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.