5 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.

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.

8 Other Points to Note

Owners’ corporations should (or cause their property management companies to):

- add contractual terms to regulate the compliance of contractors and workers with the occupational safety and health legislation of Hong Kong; and

- urge persons in charge of works to enhance safety measures to safeguard the safety of workers at work.

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: 2559 2297 (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 2542 2172. All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.

If accidents involving casualties occur in the common areas of a property in the course of repair, maintenance, alteration and addition (RMMA) works,

- the works involved will be delayed as a result.

- the owners/tenants will be emotionally disturbed.

- claims may arise and the owners’ corporation may also be held liable.

- the property value may be adversely affected.
Occupational Safety for RMAA Works in the Common Areas of a Property

Different types of RMAA works are often carried out in the common areas of a property. Some of the works may involve higher-risk work processes such as work at height 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 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’ corporation 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”).

2. **Wear Safety Helmets with Chin Straps Fastened**
   - Workers must wear safety helmets with 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 bamboo scaffolds and 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 supervision of a competent person.

5. **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.

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[Image depicting safety equipment and procedures related to scaffold usage.]