



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Construction Industry Council Publishes Safety Alert No. 001/14 Fire Safety on Construction Sites

Hong Kong • 17 April 2014 – The Construction Industry Council (CIC) today released a new publication entitled *Safety Alert No. 001/14 Fire Safety on Construction Sites* (Safety Alert). This Safety Alert is aimed at reminding various parties on the Fire Safety in the construction sites or renovation projects.

Introduction

Improper use and storage of flammable substances, poor site housekeeping, overloading of electric circuits, welding work without necessary fire precautions or improper disposal of cigarette butts in construction sites will result in fire. In view of this, the Informal Task Force on Site Safety Incidents, under the CIC's Committee on Construction Safety (Com-CSY) has prepared this Safety Alert.

The Safety Alert recommends the following: proper storage of dangerous goods; good site housekeeping practices; implement a "permit-to-work system" for hot work, such as welding; regular checks of electrical installations and electrical portable tools to ensure they meet the safety standards; and the installation of appropriate fire service equipment, including fixed fire pumps, fixed electrical installations, and portable fire extinguishers.

Publication

Mr. CHEUNG Hau-wai, Chairman of the Com-CSY of the CIC said, "Given the flammable nature of many materials on a construction site it is very important that good housekeeping and storage practices are in place. We urge all parties in the construction sites or renovation projects to consider the measures recommended in this Safety Alert and re-examine their current work practices to minimise any potential risk from fire."

Mr. Victor KWONG, Chairman of the Informal Task Force on Site Safety Incidents said, "It is important that all parties involved are aware of their responsibilities as fire can cause damage to property, delays in construction programme, serious injuries and even the

loss of life.”

The Safety Alert is available for download on the CIC’s website www.hkcic.org.

About the Construction Industry Council

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) was formed on 1 February 2007 under the *Construction Industry Council Ordinance* (Cap. 587). The CIC consists of a chairman and 24 members representing various sectors of the industry including employers, professionals, academics, contractors, workers, independent persons and government officials.

The main functions of the CIC are to forge consensus on long-term strategic issues, convey the industry’s needs and aspirations to government, provide training and registration for the construction workforce and serve as a communication channel for government to solicit advice on all construction-related matters.

To learn more about the CIC, please visit www.hkcic.org for further details.

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(The Safety Alert can be found on P.3 to P.5)



Improper use and storage of flammable substances, poor site housekeeping, overloading of electric circuits, welding work without necessary fire precautions or improper disposal of cigarette butts in construction sites will result in fire. Fire would cause damage to property, delay in construction programme, and even loss of life (especially in the sites undergoing repair, maintenance, alterations and additions works), so the persons responsible for the construction site and workers should pay attention to the following fire safety measures to prevent the occurrence of fire:

Persons Responsible for Construction Sites should:

- Maintain good housekeeping and minimise storage capacity of combustible materials as far as possible.
- Ensure that storage of the dangerous goods should be in compliance with the statutory requirements and properly stored in suitable containers placed in Dangerous Goods Stores approved by the Director of Fire Services where appropriate.
- Implement a "permit-to-work system" for hot work, such as welding.
- Ensure proper storage of construction materials. Maintain an unobstructed means of escape and passageway.
- Ensure regular removal of site wastes to avoid excessive accumulation that cause a fire to spread.
- Implement a "no smoking" policy with warning signs displayed. Only allow smoking in Designated Smoking Areas.
- Ensure that circuit breakers should be installed to trip the supply when overloading of electrical installations occurs. If there is a temporary electrical system, it should be regularly checked and be equipped with earth leakage circuit breakers to quickly trip a circuit in case of earth leakage.
- Check electrical installations and electrical portable tools regularly to ensure they meet the safety standards.
- Install appropriate fire service installations and equipment, including fixed fire pumps, fixed electrical installations, portable fire extinguishers, etc.
- Maintain all fire service installations and equipment in efficient working order and ensure they are inspected by Registered Fire Service Installation Contractor at least once every 12 months.
- Provide good ventilation during use of materials that emit flammable vapour.
- Provide basic fire precautionary training and arrange regular fire drills.
- Ensure that protective screens provided on the faces of the scaffold are made up of fire retardant materials. If tarpaulin is being used as protective screen, its fire retardant characteristic should comply with the BS 5867 - 2:2008 (Type B performance requirements) or other equivalent national / international standards or provisions.



Disclaimer

Whilst reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication, the CIC nevertheless would encourage readers to seek appropriate independent advice from their professional advisers where possible and readers should not treat or rely on this publication as a substitute for such professional advice for taking any relevant actions.

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Construction Workers should:

- Refrain from smoking in Non-Designated Smoking Areas and ensure proper disposal of cigarette butts.
- Put containers of flammable liquids over leak-proof basins.
- Keep the workplace tidy and prevent the accumulation of waste.
- Clear up all the debris nearby before carrying out any hot work. Never weld when there are combustible materials next to or below the welding area. A portable fire extinguisher should be placed at immediate readiness.
- Turn off the gas supply valves after welding.
- Avoid overloading of electric circuits.
- If fire occurs, report to the management personnel immediately.

Relevant Reference:

Buildings Department

- Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers APP21 – Demolition Works – Measures for Public Safety
- Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers APP70 – Use of Plastic Sheet to cover scaffolding outside buildings
- Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers APP91 – Maintenance and Replacement Works of Lift Installations

Fire Services Department

- Fire Protection Notice No. 13 – Fire Protection at Construction Site
- Fire Prevention Tips for Scaffolding Fire Safety

Labour Department

- Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety
- Code of Practice for Metal Scaffolding Safety

Occupational Safety and Health Council

- Fire Safety at Workplaces



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**CONSTRUCTION
INDUSTRY COUNCIL**
建造業議會

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**Provision of Fire Safety
Installations**



**No Smoking (except in Designated
Smoking Areas)**



Improper Storage of Waste



**Over Storage of Flammable
Substances**



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