



A NO. 5 ALARM FIRE AT A TAI PO HOUSING ESTATE CAUSES MULTIPLE CASUALTIES

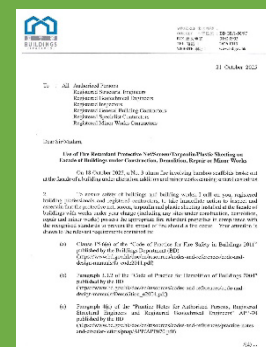
On 26 November 2025, a No.5 alarm fire broke out on the scaffolds of multiple buildings in an estate in Tai Po, causing multiple casualties. The Construction Industry Council (CIC) urges construction contractors to take immediate action to inspect and ascertain that the protective net installed at the façade of buildings possess the appropriate fire-retardant properties in compliance with the recognised standards. The CIC would like to deliver this safety message for your attention. It would be appreciated if you could distribute the message below to your fellow members, relevant personnel or other industry stakeholders where appropriate. Thank you very much.

Common Accidents

1. Protective net, screen, tarpaulin/ plastic sheeting installed to cover the façade of buildings do not have appropriate fire-retardant properties.
2. Flammable or combustible materials are not properly stored.
3. On-site personnel left unextinguished cigarette butts or behind kindling.
4. Sparks generated during hot works accidentally ignite other combustible materials.
5. Electrical overload or short circuit causes fire.
6. Lack of fire protection system due to the non-completion of fire service installations / or improper maintenance.

Critical Control Measures

1. **Maintain good housekeeping** and store flammable materials properly.
2. **Smoking is prohibited** in construction sites, or is only allowed in the designated smoking areas.
3. Provision of **sufficient fire detection equipment**, fire alarm systems and fire extinguishers.
4. Adopt appropriate Smart Site Safety System (4S) to strengthen the monitoring to the fire risks, **e.g. Smart Smoke Detecting System or Temperature Monitoring System.**
5. Appoint **fire marshal to conduct fire prevention patrol** and regular fire drills.
6. Protective net, screen, tarpaulin/plastic sheeting installed to cover the façade of buildings under construction, demolition, repair or minor works should have **appropriate fire-retardant properties** in compliance with a recognised standard. Examples of recognised standards recommended by the Buildings Department include **GB 5725-2009 – Safety nets, BS 5867-2:2008 (Type B performance requirements) and NFPA 701:2019 (Test Method 2)**; and have **sample testing** before use to ensure its flame-retardant properties.
7. **Clearly define escape route** with regular review.
8. Conduct **regular checking** on electrical circuit and installation.
9. **Implement the "Hot Work Permit System"** to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are conducted and required safety measures are implemented before work, such as erecting barriers to prevent the wind from blowing sparks onto the combustible materials, provide site fire hose for emergency use, and conduct checking to ensure no spark left after work.
10. **Do not store dangerous goods that exceed their exempted quantities** in dangerous goods, e.g. acetylene and oxygen.



Buildings Department issued circular letter on "Use of Fire Retardant Protective Net/Screen/Tarpaulin/Plastic Sheetting on Facade of Buildings under Construction, Demolition, Repair or Minor Works". (Please click to view details)



SAFETY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE HONG KONG CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

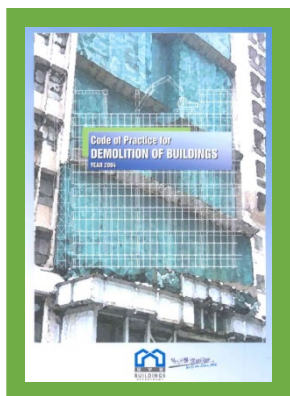
What if all stakeholders can act together and take one step further to fulfill their roles and responsibilities, can similar accidents be avoided?

- Construction team should procure protective net, screen, tarpaulin/ plastic sheeting installed to cover the façade of building that have appropriate fire-retardant properties in compliance with a recognised standard.
- In the design stage, designers and engineers should consider adopting design for safety methods to eliminate or reduce the hot works and the number of flammable materials stored in the construction site; and properly plan the material storages in the construction site.
- During the construction stage, construction team should formulate and implement an effective fire prevention plan, properly manage the site housekeeping, regularly inspect electrical equipment to ensure that all are in good condition, provide adequate firefighting equipment, and conduct regular fire drills to ensure that workers are familiar with the emergency procedures.
- The work team shall check and ensure that no residual fire risks left at their responsible areas by end of shift.
- Workers shall follow the established fire prevention measures. If potential fire risks are identified, report it to their supervisors and act against it immediately.

Reference Information



Buildings Department Circular Letter – Use of Fire Retardant Protective Net/ Screen/ Tarpaulin/ Plastic Sheet on Façade of Building under Construction, Demolition, Repair or Minor Works



Code of Practice for Demolition of Buildings 2004



Reference Material on Safety Roles and Responsibilities of Key Stakeholders in the Hong Kong Construction Industry



Poster – Fire Prevention



Please Click the Images



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