

Employers, contractors and employees should be aware of electrical safety at work during rainstorm

As the rainstorm warning has been issued by the Hong Kong Observatory, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and contractors that they should adopt necessary work arrangements and take suitable safety measures to protect the safety of their employees when they are carrying out electrical work or handling electrical plant.

A spokesman for the LD said today (July 31) that employers and contractors should avoid assigning employees to carry out electrical work (like electric arc welding work) or handle electrical plant at places affected by rainstorms, and should refer to the "Code of Practice in times of Typhoons and Rainstorms" and the "Guide on Safety at Work in times of Inclement Weather" issued by the LD.

Even if electrical work is carried out or electrical plant is handled at places not affected by the rainstorm, suitable safety measures must still be adopted to prevent electric shock as the air would be more humid. Such measures include:

- (i) Ensure that all live parts of an electrical installation are isolated from the power supply source and rendered dead, and the isolation from the power supply source must be maintained as long as electrical work is being carried out;
- (ii) Before carrying out any electrical work or handling any electrical plant, cut off and lock out the power supply source, then test the circuit concerned to confirm it is dead and display suitable warning notices, and issue a work permit thereafter;
- (iii) Ensure that protective devices (such as suitable and adequate fuses and circuit breakers) for the electrical installations or electrical plant have been installed and maintained in good working order, and portable electric tools must be double-insulated or properly earthed;
- (iv) Provide suitable personal protective equipment such as insulating gloves and insulating mats for employees; and
- (v) If live electrical work is unavoidable, a comprehensive risk assessment should be conducted by a competent person and the appropriate safety precautions should be taken to remove or properly control the electrical hazards involved before such work can proceed.

In addition, employees should co-operate with the employer or contractor to follow the safety instructions and use the safety equipment provided.

The LD has published guidebooks and leaflets on electrical work safety.

These safety publications are available free from divisional offices of the department or can be downloaded from its website (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_8.htm).

Should there be any questions about occupational safety and health matters, please contact the Occupational Safety Officer of the LD at 2559 2297.

Public urged to report flooding

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

Members of the public are advised to report any street flooding that comes to their notice to the Drainage Services Department by calling the 24-hour drainage hotline on 2300 1110.

HA improves presentation of elective surgery waiting time information

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (July 31) updated on its website the waiting time information for new case booking for Specialist Outpatient Clinic (SOPC) services and elective surgery in the latest quarter. At the same time, a new presentation of waiting time information for elective surgeries for cataract and total joint replacement has been introduced to show the actual waiting time of patients having their surgeries performed. The new presentation aims at enhancing the transparency and the relevance of the waiting time information as a reference for patients in their treatment plan decisions.

The HA Chief Manager (Quality and Standards), Dr Lau Ka-hin, said, "For instance, the previous presentation of 'notional (estimated average) waiting time' has presumed a constant surgery service capacity against a snapshot of the number of patients waiting. In fact, the overall service capacity of surgical operations, number of elective and emergency surgeries performed and the actual number of patients waiting are continuously changing. Hence, the 'notional (estimated average) waiting time' may not reflect the actual

waiting time situation."

"The new presentation provides the actual waiting time information of patients having their surgeries performed, reflecting the real service situation. This presentation is similar to the statistical presentations of other HA services such as SOPC new case booking and Accident and Emergency waiting time, by presenting the actual instead of projected situation. This will be more comprehensible to patients and facilitate their decision-making."

Dr Lau emphasised that the waiting time information on the website is presented as a reference only. Patients waiting for surgeries are having regular follow-ups at the SOPCs, with clinicians' scheduling the surgery dates according to clinical condition and urgency for operation. "Doctors will review the patient's latest situation and provide appropriate treatment during the regular follow-up appointments, while the timing of surgery will also be adjusted according to patient's latest clinical condition."

With an ever-growing number of patients waiting for elective surgeries and prolonged waiting time, the HA continues to implement various improvement measures. For instance, the HA has reviewed the waiting list of total joint replacement surgery to delete duplicated bookings and completed surgery cases so as to release more operation timeslots. Meanwhile, non-surgical treatments will be provided to patients to alleviate their clinical condition while waiting.

The HA will continue to allocate resources, through the annual plan exercise, to various Cluster programmes to enhance surgical services in the long term.

The HA also updated SOPC new case booking waiting time information today. Members of the public are welcome to browse the information on the HA website or the mobile application "HA Touch".

Open API Framework for the Banking Sector: One year on

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (July 31) the implementation progress and the future plans for the Open Application Programming Interface (Open API) Framework for the Hong Kong Banking Sector (the Framework).

The HKMA introduced the Framework in July 2018, which aims to facilitate

the development and wider adoption of APIs by the banking sector. The Framework adopts a four-phase (Note 1) implementation approach. Since the launch of Phase I in January 2019 as scheduled, the 20 participating retail banks have made available more than 500 Open APIs, offering access to information of a wide range of banking products and services. Websites and mobile apps are increasingly making use of these Open APIs in the provision of various services such as foreign exchange rate information, deposit rate and loan product comparison.

The 20 participating retail banks will further launch Phase II Open APIs by end of October 2019 as scheduled (Note 2) to process applications for banking products and services. However, as in Phase I, it may take time for new applications using these Open APIs to gradually emerge in the market, depending on the complexity of the API design of individual banks.

Since Phase III and IV Open APIs involve access to customer data and processing of transactions, their implementations are more complex and require stronger control measures. Having discussed with the relevant stakeholders, and taken into account the experience in the implementation of Phase I and II as well as relevant international practices, the HKMA considers it desirable to define a more detailed set of standards for Phase III and IV Open APIs to facilitate secure and efficient implementation across the industry before setting out a concrete implementation timetable. By standardising data definitions and transfer processes, accurate data aggregation can be achieved and customer trust in using the related services can be enhanced. In this connection, the HKMA will work with the industry on details of API standardisation in the next few months with a view to publishing a set of technical standards in 2020.

Meanwhile, some banks and third-party service providers are already collaborating on a bilateral basis for early adoption of Open APIs under Phase III and IV. The HKMA will continue to encourage such developments while working on the sector-wide framework and will take account of the experience of these banks during the API standardisation. The HKMA will keep abreast of market responses and international developments of Open APIs to review and refine the implementation plans as necessary.

Deputy Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Howard Lee said, "We are pleased to see the encouraging progress of banking Open APIs in the past year. As we move on to the next phase, with more sensitive data and complex functions covered, it is even more important to ensure security and safeguard customer interests. What the HKMA now sets for Phase III and IV will lay a solid foundation for further opening up of banking data and functions in a prudent manner while balancing the industry needs for API development. This move will help contribute to Hong Kong's development as a smart city and, in conjunction with other Smart Banking initiatives the HKMA has announced, further strengthen our status as an international financial centre and fintech hub in the region."

Note 1: The four phases of Open API are: Product information (Phase I); Customer acquisition (Phase II); Account information (Phase III); and

Transactions (Phase IV).

Note 2: A summary of implementation roadmaps for Phase II was published on the [HKMA website](#) in May 2019.

Customs Inspector recruitment examination postponed

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The Customs and Excise Department announces that due to inclement weather, the group discussion for the Customs Inspector recruitment examination scheduled in the afternoon today (July 31) will be postponed. Candidates will be informed of the rescheduling arrangement through emails.