

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 (August 18) 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.

HAD to open temporary shelters

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

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

As the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 is issued, the Home Affairs Department will open temporary shelters for people in need of temporary accommodation.

For details, please contact the emergency hotline on 2572 8427.

Marine Department announcement (3)

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

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

As the No.8 Northeast Gale or Storm Signal has been issued, the Marine Department reminds vessel owners, masters and persons-in-charge of vessels that they should take precautionary measures immediately and properly secure their vessels at safe locations.

In case of an accident, a report should be made immediately to the Vessel Traffic Centre at 2233 7801.

LD urges employers and employees to make and flexibly implement work arrangements for typhoons and rainstorms

As Typhoon Warning Signal No. 8 is now in force, the Labour Department (LD) today (August 18) reminded employers to make work arrangements for staff during and after typhoons and rainstorms. In implementing the work arrangements, employers should give consideration as much as possible to the situations faced by individual employees, such as their place of residence and the road and traffic conditions in the vicinity, and adopt a sympathetic and flexible approach with due regard to their actual difficulties and needs. Employers should also observe the statutory liabilities and requirements under the relevant legislation.

The LD has published the "Code of Practice in Times of Typhoons and Rainstorms", which outlines the major principles, the framework, the reference guidelines and information on relevant legislation for reference in drawing up the work arrangements under adverse weather conditions. The booklet can be downloaded from the department's webpage (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/Rainstorm.pdf).