

Contractors/employers and employees urged to practice workplace safety after Chinese New Year holidays

The Labour Department has urged contractors, employers and employees to be more vigilant, check their workplaces and take adequate safety precautions before resuming work after the Chinese New Year holidays.

A spokesperson for the department said today (February 16) that both management and employees should pay more attention to work safety as their safety alertness might have diminished and workplace conditions might have changed after long holidays.

The spokesperson said, "If the work involves processes, machinery or equipment with potential hazards, it is vital to check, prepare and implement necessary safety measures in advance before the commencement of work.

"All scaffolding, working platforms, lifting appliances, temporary power supplies, gas welding and flame cutting operations, chemical processes, confined spaces, sewage works and excavations should be inspected by competent persons to ensure that they are in safe condition before putting them into use again or resuming operation.

"Employees should also be fully advised and instructed to follow safety precautions when working at height or engaging in lifting operation, tunnelling works, electrical work and other hazardous work," the spokesperson added.

To prevent work accidents, the spokesperson urged contractors and employers to step up monitoring to ensure workplace safety after the holidays.

The general duty provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance require employers to provide safe working environments, plant and systems of work for their employees. Those who contravene the relevant provisions are liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for two years on conviction on indictment; or a maximum fine of \$3 million and imprisonment for six months on summary conviction.

Meanwhile, employees should co-operate by following safety instructions and by using safety equipment.

For enquiries on occupational safety and health, please contact the department's occupational safety officers at 2559 2297.