

Labour Department promotes lifting work safety (with photos)

The Labour Department (LD) launched a promotional campaign today (July 31) to promote safe lifting practices at work. The LD reminds all employers, contractors and workers that lifting is a common occurrence in workplaces and unsafe lifting practices may cause serious accidents. The LD calls on industry practitioners to pay attention to work safety.

From January to June 2024, the LD recorded three fatal work accidents related to lifting objects at work. The LD reminds employers and contractors that, when carrying out lifting work, they must provide appropriate lifting appliances and gear for workers, and implement a safe system of work to ensure safe lifting practices with a view to safeguarding the occupational safety and health (OSH) of workers. Workers should also co-operate with their employers, adopt all safety measures and properly use provided personal protective equipment to avoid endangering their own work safety and that of other workers.

The Deputy Commissioner for Labour (Occupational Safety and Health), Mr Vincent Fung, visited a factory today to promote safe lifting practices to employers and workers. He said that the LD attaches great importance to the OSH of workers, pursuant to a risk-based principle and closely monitors the risk levels and the changes of OSH in various industries. The LD formulates and adjusts the three-pronged strategies, namely inspection and enforcement, publicity and promotion, as well as education and training, in a timely manner to promote an OSH culture.

Regarding the publicity and promotion of safe lifting practices, the LD sends OSH messages to employers, employees and duty holders through various means and channels. These include issuing a "Work Safety Alert" on the LD's website, the "OSH 2.0" mobile application, and via email, to provide a brief account of the accident and remind the industries to take safety precautions to prevent similar accidents. The LD has also published a new "Accident Casebook on Lifting Operation", which analyses the causes of common lifting accidents on construction sites and proposes practical safety measures. On the Occupational Safety and Health e-Quiz platform on the LD's website, new chapters and Q&A sections on lifting work safety have been added to enable interactive teaching for contractors and employers. In addition, the "Code of Practice for Safe Use of Mobile Cranes" and the "Code of Practice for Safe Use of Tower Cranes" published by the LD provide practical guidance on the safe use and operation of mobile and tower cranes respectively to ensure the safety of personnel working at or nearby those cranes.

For education and training, the LD has enhanced the course content of the Mandatory Basic Safety Training Course (Green Card course) by adding safety concerns for new construction workers, lifting at work safety issues, etc in order to reduce accident risks. These enhanced courses were rolled out

in October 2023.

In addition, the LD recently completed a two-week special enforcement operation, targeting safety in logistic, cargo and container handling operations to combat unsafe work practices in workplaces, including unsafe lifting of goods. The operation was carried out from July 2 to 12. During the period, 138 warning notices and five improvement notices were issued, and seven prosecutions were initiated.

Mr Fung said, "The Government will spare no effort in inspection and enforcement, publicity and promotion as well as education and training to ensure work safety. To safeguard the OSH of workers, employers and employees are equally responsible. Everyone should take one step forward to enhance OSH performance."

The LD will continue to carry out different inspection and enforcement actions and will take actions pursuant to the law if there is any violation of OSH legislation. In the meantime, the LD will continue to strengthen the publicity work to share OSH messages through different channels and means, reminding employers, employees and duty holders not to contravene OSH legislation, as well as enhance the safety awareness of workers and frontline supervisors to improve the OSH culture.

