

LD invites entries for 21st Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme

Members of the construction industry are invited to enrol in the Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme 2019/2020, which was launched today (September 10). The scheme is organised by the Labour Department (LD), in collaboration with 15 co-organisers which are major stakeholders in the construction industry.

An LD spokesman said, "The scheme, rolled out in 1999, aims to raise the occupational safety and health (OSH) awareness of contractors, site personnel and workers of the construction industry; to foster a positive safety culture and to encourage the adoption of safe work practices in the industry. The scheme also offers awards to contractors, site personnel and workers in recognition of their good OSH performances.

"With the concerted efforts of stakeholders over the years, there has been a constant and notable improvement in the OSH performance of the construction industry. The number of industrial accidents and the accident rate per thousand workers in the construction industry fell from 14 078 and 198.4 in 1999 to 3 541 and 31.7 in 2018, representing a drop of 74.8 per cent and 84.0 per cent respectively."

The spokesman added, "However, there is no room for complacency. We must strive for further improvement in the OSH performance. The construction industry is still a high-risk industry, with the accident figure being the second highest among all industries behind the food and beverage services. In 2018, 33.4 per cent of industrial accidents and 87.5 per cent of fatal cases occurred on construction sites, accounting for the bulk of industrial fatalities."

To keep stakeholders in the construction industry alert to work safety to further reduce the accident toll, the department has again worked with the Occupational Safety and Health Council, the Development Bureau, the Hong Kong Housing Authority, the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board, the Construction Industry Council, the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund Board, the Hong Kong Housing Society, the Hong Kong Construction Association, the Hong Kong General Building Contractors Association, the Hong Kong Construction Sub-contractors Association, the Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors Limited, the Minor Works Contractor Association, the Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies, the Hong Kong Construction Industry Employees General Union and The Federation of Hong Kong Electrical and Mechanical Industries Trade Unions to launch the scheme this year.

All construction contractors, sub-contractors and site personnel in Hong

Kong are invited to compete for the awards, provided that no serious or fatal accidents have been recorded on the construction sites and the contractors or sub-contractors have not received any suspension notices served by the LD in the 12 months preceding the enrolment deadline.

The scheme is divided into three main categories: Construction Sites, Safety Teams and Safe Workers. Entries for the Construction Sites category will be divided into eight sub-categories, namely Building Sites (Public Sector); Building Sites (Private Sector); Civil Engineering Sites; Renovation and Maintenance Works; Minor Renovation and Maintenance Works; Building Sites – Sub-contractors; Civil Engineering Sites – Sub-contractors; and Renovation and Maintenance Works – Sub-contractors.

For each of the eight sub-categories under the Construction Sites category, and the Safety Teams category, there will be a gold prize, a silver prize, a bronze prize and a meritorious prize. For the Safe Workers category, each Safe Worker will be presented with a cash coupon, a certificate and a badge.

In addition, every eligible entry in the Construction Sites category will automatically compete for the "Outstanding Performance in Work-at-height Safety Award" in its respective sub-category, which is to encourage contractors to take more effective safety measures for work-at-height activities, and recognise their outstanding safety performance in that area. Besides, all eligible entries in three sub-categories, namely Building Sites (Public Sector), Building Sites (Private Sector) and Civil Engineering Sites under the Construction Sites category will automatically compete for the respective "Most Active Participating Construction Sites" award. The winners of the three sub-categories will be those who have the highest number of sub-contractor contestants in the sub-categories and their performances are good enough.

A new award, namely the "Most Active Construction Site in Promoting Safety Supervision Training", is introduced this year under the sub-category of Building Sites (Private Sector) of Construction Sites to recognise contractors which have actively enhanced safety supervisor competency by appointing those with relevant training qualifications.

To encourage participation from the industry, certificates of good performance will be awarded to entries in each sub-category other than Minor Renovation and Maintenance Works under the Construction Sites category and the Safety Teams category, which have undergone the final assessment but failed to win any prizes, provided that their performance reaches the standard set by the judging panel. For entries in the Minor Renovation and Maintenance Works sub-category similarly failing to win any prizes, cash coupons in addition to certificates of appreciation will be given to encourage participation of small and medium-sized contractors engaged in renovation and maintenance works.

The closing date for entries for the Construction Sites and Safety Teams categories is September 30. The assessment criteria will cover various

aspects concerning the physical site conditions and the safety management systems. Selection of Safe Workers will be conducted when the assessment teams are performing physical site assessments. The assessment this year will focus on work at height/work above ground, scaffolding, confined space, lifting appliance and lifting operations, as well as electrical installation and application. The results will be announced in March next year.

Enrolment forms with entry requirements can be obtained from offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the LD (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/tele/od.htm). They can also be downloaded from the LD's website (www.labour.gov.hk). Enquiries can be made on 2852 3565.

In addition, the scheme will feature a number of promotional activities, including a safety quiz competition, to enhance the OSH awareness of the industry and the public. The quiz competition is divided into Individual and Group categories. Citizens aged 15 or above and construction-related organisations are welcome to join respectively. Enrolment will start on October 2, from when application forms can be obtained from offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Branch or downloaded from the LD's website. The deadline for enrolment is October 29.