

LD invites entries for 22nd Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme

Members of the construction industry are invited to enrol in the Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme 2021/2022, which was launched today (September 16). The scheme is organised by the Labour Department (LD), in collaboration with 15 co-organisers that are major stakeholders in the construction industry.

An LD spokesman said, "The scheme has been rolled out since 1999, except for the suspension in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 epidemic, and 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 performance.

"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 1 000 workers in the construction industry fell from 14 078 and 198.4 respectively in 1999 to 2 532 and 26.1 respectively in 2020, representing decreases of 82.0 per cent and 86.4 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 its accident figure being the second highest among all industries behind food and beverage services. In 2020, 35.2 per cent of industrial accidents occurred on construction sites. The fatal cases in the construction industry accounted for 85.7 per cent of the bulk of industrial fatalities, topping those of all industries."

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 and the new Outstanding Performance in Lifting Safety Award in its respective sub-category, which are intended to encourage contractors to take more effective safety measures for work-at-height activities and lifting operations, and recognise their outstanding safety performance in these two areas. In addition, 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 with the highest number of sub-contractor contestants in the sub-categories and with performance that is suitably good.

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 that 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 October 6. 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, and electrical installation and application. The results will be announced in March next year.

Enrolment forms with entry requirements can be obtained by interested parties 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 7, and application forms can be obtained from offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Branch or downloaded from the LD's website from that date onwards. The deadline for enrolment is November 3.