

Revised Code of Practice for Safety and Health at Work in Confined Spaces gazetted

The Labour Department (LD) published a revised Code of Practice for Safety and Health at Work in Confined Spaces (CoP) in the Gazette today (May 31) to enhance the safety and health in confined spaces work.

The major revisions of the CoP include the enhancement of requirements for proprietors' or contractors' supervision on confined space work; highlighting the factors for assessing whether a particular job constitutes underground pipework; adding a detailed template of the risk assessment form and listing out the setting of an air-monitoring alarm; and the update on the Permit-to-work Certificate template.

A spokesperson for the LD said, "The revised CoP requires proprietors or contractors to adopt technology to record videos at the entrance and exit of the confined space throughout the entire work period to monitor relevant personnel's compliance with the safety precautions and to keep the record. Considering the time required for the industry to furnish suitable equipment and make necessary arrangements for implementing all safety precautions, there will be a six-month grace period. It will take effect on November 30 to allow the industry to have sufficient time for preparation."

The spokesperson said that the CoP provides proprietors, contractors, competent persons and certified workers with practical guidance and technical information to comply with the requirements set out in the occupational safety and health legislation regarding confined space work for safeguarding the safety and health of workers.

The spokesperson added, "This CoP has a special legal status. In criminal proceedings, if a relevant person fails to observe any provision of this Code, that failure may be taken by the court as a relevant factor in determining whether or not a person has breached the relevant safety and health legislation."

The revised CoP can be downloaded from the LD website (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_8b.htm). Enquiries about the CoP can be made at 2559 2297.