



Work Safety Alert Electrocution when Laying Electric Cable

1. **Date of Accident :** August 2016
2. **Place of Accident :** An office building
3. **Summary :**

A worker while carrying out electric cable laying work inside a false ceiling of an office building was suspected to have received an electric shock. He died two days later.

4. **Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Employers :**

To prevent electrical hazard associated with cable laying work, the contractor/ employer responsible for the work should provide and maintain a safe system of work which should include, but not limited to, the following:

- appointing a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments for identifying all potential hazards (including electrical hazard) associated with the cable laying work, taking into account both the nature of work and working environment;
- formulating appropriate safe work methods and procedures to eliminate all hazards indicated in the risk assessments results;
- if it is unavoidable for cable laying work to be carried out in working environment that is more prone to electrical hazard, such as wet environment, ceiling voids, or close proximity to live conductors or earthed structures/ fittings, a permit-to-work system should be adopted with appropriate safety precautions devised and implemented to eliminate or properly control the electrical hazard;



- taking effective steps, including checking by a Registered Electrical Worker (“REW”) to ensure that all live parts of any electrical system in the vicinity are rendered dead;
- before working on or near any electrical circuit/ system installed with capacitors/ capacitor banks, ensuring that all capacitors are isolated with enclosures, barriers or by other means so as to prevent accidental contact by the workers/ employees; otherwise, disconnecting them from the power supply and fully discharging their stored charge;
- providing and maintaining suitable and adequate safe means of access to and egress from every place for the electrical work;
- providing a suitable working platform for works that cannot be safely performed on the ground;
- ensuring that every part of the workplace is sufficiently and suitably lit;
- providing and ensuring the proper use of insulating gloves by the workers/ employees engaged in electrical work;
- providing each worker/ employee employed at the workplace with a suitable safety helmet that is equipped with a chin strap, and taking all reasonable steps to ensure every worker/ employee wear such helmet during work;
- appointing REW to conduct the electrical work as far as practicable and under no circumstances should a non-REW be allowed to carry out the electrical work unless he is under the supervision of an REW ;
- providing necessary safety information, instruction and training to all workers/ employees involved in the work and ensuring that they are familiar with the safe work procedures and safety measures before assigning them with electrical tasks; and
- establishing and implementing an effective monitoring system to ensure the above safety measures are strictly followed.



5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work¹](#)
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment¹](#)
- [Guidance Notes for the Safe Isolation of Electricity Source at Work¹](#)
- [Lighting Assessment in the Workplace¹](#)
- [Code of Practice for the Electricity \(Wiring\) Regulations, 2015 Edition, by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department¹](#)

DISCLAIMER

This Work Safety Alert (“the Alert”) is issued at the earliest possible opportunity after a serious accident with a view to drawing the attention of interested parties to the general safety precautionary measures necessary to protect people engaging in similar work activities. The material contained in the Alert constitutes general guidance only. It does not reduce, limit, or replace, any legal obligations upon any person to comply with any statutory duties under relevant legislation. Users such as Managers and Supervisors should make their own evaluation of the information contained in the Alert to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices. The Labour Department does NOT accept any responsibilities for any loss or damage resulting from the use of or failure to use of the information on the Alert.

Note: The material contained in the Alert is not exhaustive, and will be supplemented/ adjusted where necessary if more relevant information comes to light.

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