

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a tall, multi-story industrial building. The building has a grid-like facade of windows. At the base of the building, there is a large fire with bright orange and yellow flames. A fire truck is partially visible on the right side of the building, with its emergency lights flashing. The sky is a pale blue with some light clouds.

Fire Safety in
**INDUSTRIAL
PREMISES**

Introduction

The industry and economy of Hong Kong have greatly suffered from the wastage of production time, loss and damage to life and property as a result of fires occurred in industrial premises. According to the statistics of the Fire Services Department, the major causes of fires in industrial premises are due to negligence, poor house-keeping and malfunction of machineries. Therefore, employers and employees should pay more attention to fire safety measures within their factories. Some of the common fire risks in these premises are:-

- (1) Obstruction to means of escape.
- (2) Exits and exit doors locked up.
- (3) Smoke stop doors damaged or wedged open.
- (4) Careless handling or over storage of dangerous goods.
- (5) Overloading of electricity thus causing overheating.
- (6) Damage to, worn-out or lack of maintenance of electric wiring.
- (7) Obstruction to fire service installations and equipment thus affecting their use and operation.
- (8) Lack of proper maintenance of machineries or poor house-keeping of goods.
- (9) Careless handling of cutting equipment.
- (10) Unauthorized alteration to partitions or design of premises.
- (11) Lack of proper maintenance or repair of fire service installations and equipment.

If the management, employers and employees of industrial premises ignore the fire safety measures, it will not only cause extra difficulties to Fire Services personnel in discharging their duties but also pose greater threat to life and property in case of fire.



Major causes of fires in industrial premises

- (1) Improper installation of electrical equipment such as overloading of electricity, misuse of adaptors, illegal connection of wiring or malfunction of electrical appliances, etc.
- (2) Careless handling of dangerous goods especially those materials which give off inflammable vapour like paints and thinner, etc.
- (3) Improper or careless handling of welding equipment.
- (4) Overheating of machinery due to lack of repair and maintenance.
- (5) Careless disposal of lighted cigarette ends and smoking materials, etc.



What to do in case of fire

If there is a fire, keep calm, and follow the following procedures:-

- (1) Sound the fire alarm to alert other people within the premises.
- (2) Dial 999 or call the Fire Services Communication Centre at 2723 2233 immediately.
- (3) Tackle the fire with hose reel or fire extinguisher when the situation is safe. Also make sure that you can retreat safely when needed.
- (4) If the fire is out of control, leave the scene at once and assist those in need of help to retreat.
- (5) Never use the lift.
- (6) Do not run, leave the scene by using the staircase in an orderly manner.
- (7) Evacuate to designated assembly place.
- (8) Report to Fire Services personnel at scene immediately if there is person suspected to be trapped in fire scene.



General knowledge on fire precautions in industrial premises

It is the responsibility of the employers and employees to take all necessary precautionary measures to prevent the outbreak of fire in industrial premises. The following rules must be strictly observed:



- (1) Maintain a free passageway in means of escape
 - i. Ensure that all means of escape (for example: exits, corridors, staircases and smoke lobbies) are free from obstruction at all times.
 - ii. No metal gate should be erected in corridors and staircases. Exit doors on ground floor and roof level should not be locked.
- (2) Proper use of smoke stop doors

The main function of smoke stop doors is to check the spread of fire and smoke and to provide a safe escape route for workers of the premises in the event of fire. Smoke stop doors should, therefore, be properly maintained and always kept in close position in order to prevent fire and smoke from entering the corridors and staircases.
- (3) Proper handling and storage of dangerous goods
 - i. In accordance with Dangerous Goods Ordinance, dangerous goods exceeding the exempted quantity should be stored in a licensed dangerous goods store.
 - ii. Dangerous goods must be handled with extreme care. When they are being in use, no naked light is allowed at the nearby vicinity in order to prevent the outbreak of fire and explosion.
- (4) Correct use of electricity
 - i. Do not connect too many electrical appliances to one socket.
 - ii. Do not overload the system.



- iii. Electric wiring should be properly connected to avoid overheating.
 - iv. Do not use damaged plugs, sockets or electric wiring.
 - v. All electrical installations should be regularly maintained by registered electrical contractors/workers.
- (5) Proper house-keeping inside factory premises
- i. Goods should not be stacked too high to hinder the operation of sprinkler system.
 - ii. Machineries should be properly maintained.
 - iii. Goods should be properly stored so as to provide a free escape route to the workers in case of fire.
 - iv. Cutting process should be properly handled as sparks generated might ignite nearby combustibles.
 - v. Safety manual should be drawn up if dangerous goods (such as inflammable, corrosive or toxic materials) are to be used during the process of production.
- (6) Alterations to premises
- Industrial premises are designed and constructed in accordance with specific fire safety standards. Factory owners should obtain approval from appropriate authorities before carrying out alterations to these premises.
- (7) Proper maintenance of fire service installations and equipment
- i. Owners of industrial premises should ensure that all fire service installations and equipment are functioning effectively at all times. These fire service installations and equipment must be checked, inspected and maintained by a registered fire service installation contractor at least once in every 12 months.
 - ii. Properly maintained fire service installations and equipment are very useful in tackling and controlling a fire at its incipient stage. It will also assist Fire Services personnel in their fire fighting and rescue operation thus minimizing the loss of life and property.





For enquiry or complaint on fire hazards
please telephone

2723 8787

or contact any fire station