



A WORKER DROWNED IN WATER FOR SEEPAGE TEST AT A RESIDENTIAL BUILDING IN TUEN MUN AND PASSED AWAY 13 DAYS LATER

On 1 August 2025, while draining dyed water for a seepage test of waterproofing works on the roof of a residential building in Tuen Mun, a waterproofing worker's left arm became stuck in a drainage opening. This caused his face to be submerged in water, resulting in his drowning. The worker passed away 13 days later. The Construction Industry Council (CIC) would like to deliver this safety message for your attention. It would be appreciated if you could distribute the message below to your fellow members, relevant personnel or other industry stakeholders where appropriate. Thank you very much.

Common Accidents

1. Worker was struck at a drainage opening by suction forces while draining water, resulting in his drowning.
2. Workers fail to keep away from fatal zones when working (e.g. the area where dyed water is being drained).
3. Failure to formulate the safe working procedures for seepage test.
4. Failure to provide necessary safety information, instructions, training and supervision to the workers concerned.
5. Failure to conduct dynamic risk assessments and take appropriate safety measures in response to changes in the environment and procedures.

Critical Control Measures

1. Prior to the commencement of works, construction team should conduct risk assessments to identify the risks of drowning and develop safe working procedures.
2. Provide appropriate mechanical tools or suitable devices for removing obstructions or covers from drainage openings, and strictly prohibit workers from reaching into them with bare hands.
3. Install protective grating or strainers at drainage openings to prevent accidental contact, hence eliminating the risk due to suction forces.
4. Fence off the fatal zone (e.g. the area where dyed water is being drained) properly and the lookout man should stay outside the fatal zone to ensure that no one enters the fatal zone at all times.
5. Establish and implement an effective monitoring and control system for water seepage testing work.
6. Provide all workers concerned with the necessary safety information, instructions, training and supervision, and ensure that they are familiar with the safe work procedures of the water seepage testing work.



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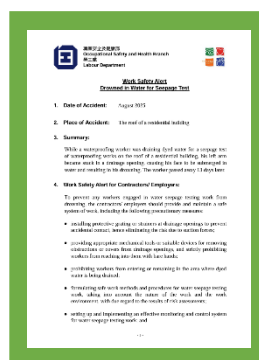


SAFETY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE HONG KONG CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

What if all stakeholders can act together and take one step further to fulfill their roles and responsibilities, can similar accidents be avoided?

- In the design stage, designers and engineers should take into accounts the work nature and work environment; and adopt suitable construction methods and mechanical tools.
- During the construction stage, the work team should establish and implement an effective management system. Besides, consider using appropriate Smart Site Safety System (4S), for example, adopt digitised permit-to-work system for high-risk activities. The person in-charge of the work should only authorise workers to drain the dyed water after confirming that all necessary safety measures have been taken.
- The work team could constantly identify the changes in the process or the environment through dynamic risk assessment and apply control measures to eliminate the hazard.
- Workers should follow the developed safe working procedures, if any risks of drowning are identified, report it to their supervisors immediately.

Reference Information



Work Safety Alert - Drowned in
Water for Seepage Test
(Source: Labour Department)



Reference Material on Safety
Roles and Responsibilities of Key
Stakeholders in the Hong Kong
Construction Industry



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