

## WSH Bulletin, 27 October 2020: Industry reminded on good SMM and WSH practices as the economy reopens

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### Industry reminded on good SMM and WSH practices as the economy reopens

The Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Council, together with the Ministry of Manpower and the Singapore Contractors Association Limited, organised a construction site visit on 22 October 2020 to observe good Safe Management Measures (SMM) and Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) practices implemented by Kuan Aik Hong Construction Pte Ltd.

Mr Zaqy Mohamad, Senior Minister of State for Manpower, and industry partners witnessed how SMM was implemented on-site, such as using safe distancing devices to enforce a distance of one metre between workers. The devices are attached onto the workers and an alarm will activate when they come into close proximity of each other. The devices are also connected to an app and the supervisors will be able to tell which workers have breached safe distancing measures. Contactless temperature scanners are also deployed at the worksites for early detection of workers with fever.

Besides enforcing SMM on-site to prevent the resurgence of COVID-19, Kuan Aik Hong Construction placed high importance on WSH as well. They have increased the frequency of site walks by their management, "Safety Time-Outs" and WSH training for their workers, and have also implemented online WSH reporting for workers to report any unsafe practices, conditions, near-miss incidents or feedback. These have improved the company's response time to mitigate and rectify reported issues, thus, preventing accidents and lowering risks faced by workers.

The company has also placed great importance on the health of their workers. Leveraging technology, they have utilised a hydraulic ring static pile breaker instead of traditional hand-held pneumatic pile breakers, to eliminate potential exposure to occupational diseases such as hand-arm vibration syndrome, excessive noise, dust and lower back pain. Not only were the workers' reported injuries due to the above symptoms reduced, but there was also a 50% improvement in productivity. Further efforts to care for their workers' health include their investment in a **MN Ultron Mosquito Eliminator** to eliminate any breeding of mosquitoes in the site and thus mitigating any potential dengue outbreak.

**Mr Zaqy** commended the company on their SMM and WSH efforts, and urged construction industry stakeholders to put in place the necessary SMM to prevent a resurgence of COVID-19 infections and a robust WSH system to ensure a safe restart. With 10 workplace fatalities across various industries since 2 June, he reminded businesses not to rush to start their operations and make up for lost time, especially when it comes at the expense of WSH. "WSH must remain a priority and I would like to remind companies to keep their guard up and remain vigilant," he said.

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This was echoed by Mr Ng Yek Meng, President of the Singapore Contractors Association Limited: "I urge my fellow construction industry partners to stand together to fight this virus to achieve better WSH performance and outcomes. This would benefit everyone in the construction ecosystem in the long run and thus ensure that our workforce's safety, health and well-being are taken care of."



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