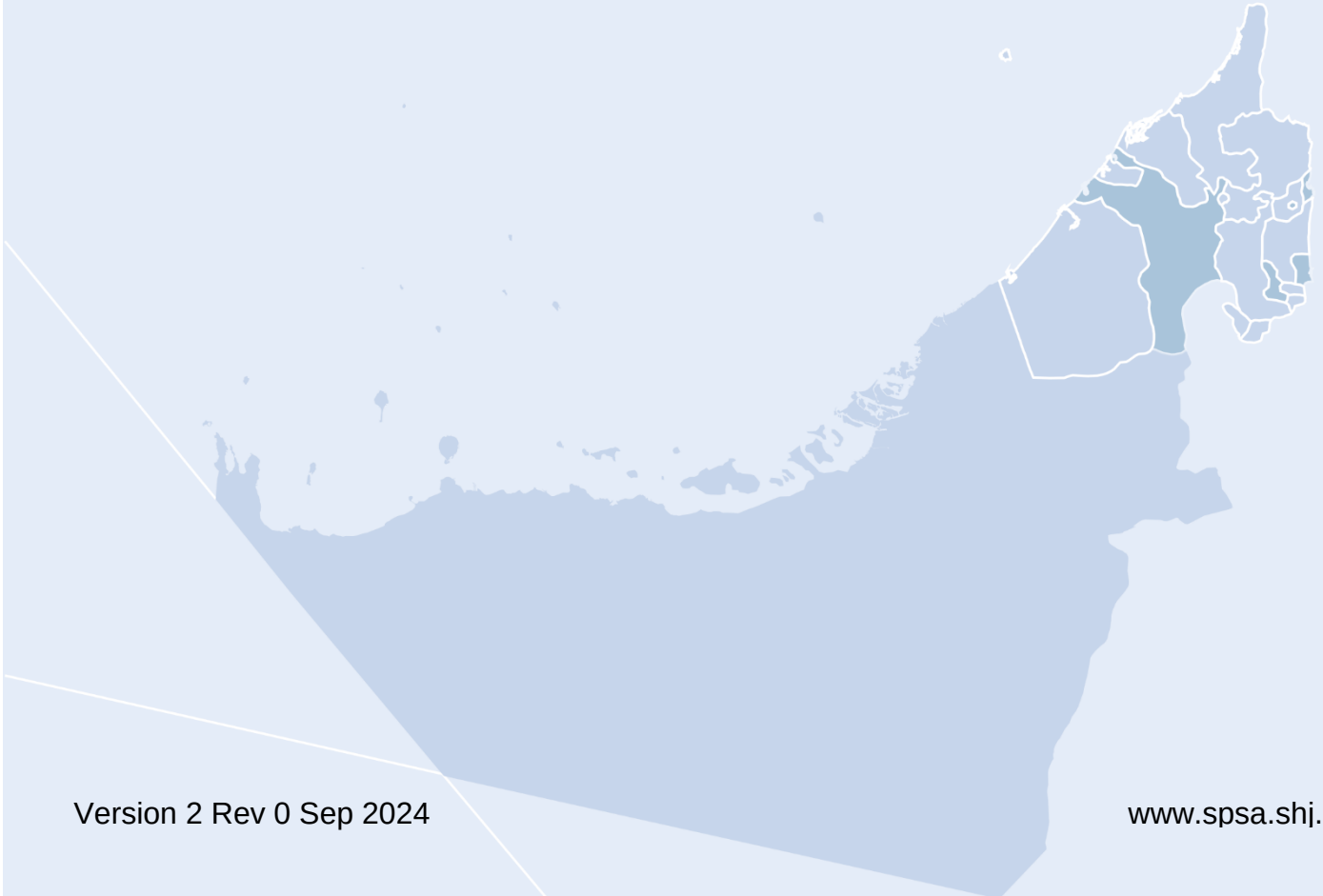
نظام الشارقة للسلامة والصحة المهنية
Occupational Safety & Health Sharjah

حكومة الشارقة
هيئة الوقاية والسلامة
Government of Sharjah
Prevention And Safety Authority

Code of Practice

Permit to Work for Hazardous Activities

OSHJ-CoP-34



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1 Introduction

A permit-to-work system is defined as a formal recorded process used to control work activities that have been identified as potentially hazardous. It is also a means of communication between management, supervisors and operators and those who carry out the hazardous work.

A permit-to-work system aims to ensure that adequate consideration is given to the risks of a particular work activity or simultaneous work activities in the workplace. The permit is a detailed document which authorises certain employees to carry out specific work activities at a specific workplace at a certain time, and which sets out the precautions needed to complete the work activities safely.

2 Purpose and Scope

This Code of Practice (CoP) has been developed to provide information to entities to assist them in complying with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health System in Sharjah.

This Code of Practice (CoP) defines the minimum acceptable requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health System in Sharjah, and entities can apply practices higher than, but not lower than those mentioned in this document, as they demonstrate the lowest acceptable level of compliance in the Emirate of Sharjah.

3 Definitions and Abbreviations

Entities:	Government Entities: Government departments, authorities or establishments and the like in the Emirate. Private Entities: Establishments, companies, enterprises and economic activities operating in the Emirate in general.
Risk:	Is the combination of likelihood of the hazard causing the loss and the severity of that loss (consequences).
Risk Assessment:	The systematic identification of workplace hazards and evaluation of the risks associated. This process takes existing control measures into account and identifies and recommends further control measures where required.
Hazard:	Anything that has the potential to cause harm or loss (injury, disease, ill-health, property damage etc).
Competence:	The combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge that a person has and their ability to apply all of them to perform their work.
Permit-to-Work (PTW):	Is a formal recorded process used to control work activities that have been identified as potentially hazardous.
Workplace:	A place that the entity allocates for the performance of the work. This term shall also include the employees' resting places, their accommodation and similar places that the entity allocates to his employees.
Authorised Person:	Any person the entity designates as having the authority to act on the entity’s behalf.

Simultaneous Activities:	Also known as 'simultaneous operations', this refers to two or more work activities carried out within the same location at the same time.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Entity Responsibilities

- Ensure a permit-to-work system is developed and implemented;
- Ensure clear roles and responsibilities are identified for all employees involved in the permit-to-work system;
- Appoint a competent person to control the permit-to-work system;
- Ensure employees are aware of the permit-to-work system and trained in its operation;
- Ensure that the information within the permit is explained in the language understood by the work party;
- Monitor the permit-to-work system to ensure that it is effective and correctly applied;
- Ensure resources are provided to enable the permit-to-work system to be properly implemented, supervised and monitored.

4.2 Employee Responsibilities

- Not endanger themselves or others;
- Follow precautionary control measures to ensure work activities are performed safely and without risk to health;
- Cooperate with the entity and receive safety information, instruction, supervision and training;
- Report any activity or defect relating to the use of permit to work which they know is likely to endanger the safety of themselves or that of any other person.

5 Requirements

The entity should consider a permit-to-work system whenever the entity intends to carry out work which may adversely affect the safety and health of employees.

Essential features of permit-to-work system, include:

- Clear identification of who authorises specific work activities and any limits to their authority, and who is responsible for specifying the necessary precautions;
- Clear identification of to whom the permit is issued, names not job roles/positions;
- Training and instruction in the issue, use and closure of permits for people involved;
- Monitoring and auditing to ensure that the system works as intended;
- Clear identification of the types of work considered hazardous;

- Clear and standardised identification of tasks, risk assessments, permitted task duration and supplemental or simultaneous activity and control measures.

The permit-to-work does not, in itself, make the work activity safe but relies on specified personnel effectively implementing its requirements under competent supervision. It is therefore essential that anyone undertaking hazardous work can demonstrate that they have followed an appropriate risk assessment process to identify and minimise any hazard associated with the proposed work.

5.1 Scope of a Permit-to-Work

The entity should ensure each permit to work has a clearly defined scope of work, including:

- Each permit-to-work should only be used to cover one specific work activity;
- The scope of work should be clearly defined on the permit-to-work form, including the starting and finishing time of the proposed work;
- The completion of the work should not exceed the finishing time stated on the permit-to-work;
- The timeframes of a permit-to-work should not exceed one working shift;
- Should the work extend beyond the stated finishing time an extension can be applied for, subject to reapproval from the permit issuer.

5.2 Planning and Risk Assessment

The entity should ensure that planned work includes an assessment of any risks involved in the work activities. When a permit-to-work activity is identified, planning and risk assessment should determine exactly what the work activities will involve, including but not limited to:

- Undertaking a risk assessment including consideration of other simultaneous work activities planned for the workplace;
- Implementing effective control measures to manage risks to ensure work activities are conducted safely and without risk to health;
- Where it is obvious that the task cannot be carried out safely, and the risk assessment identifies risks that cannot be adequately controlled, or if the proposed work or task will pose unacceptable risks for people in the workplace, then the work should not be permitted. A safer method will need to be identified.

Further information on risk assessment can be found in OSHJ-CoP-01: Risk Management and Control.

5.3 When is a Permit-to-Work Required?

A permit-to-work system is a formal recorded process used to control work activities that have been identified as potentially hazardous, including but not limited to:

- Work of any type where heat is used or generated or where there are other sources of ignition;
- Work that has to be conducted in close proximity of a flammable, toxic, other dangerous substance and/or pressure system;

- Work on or near high voltage electrical equipment or other work on electrical equipment which may give rise to danger;
- Work with hazardous substances;
- Work at height;
- Lifting operations;
- Any other non-routine or hazardous work activity.

5.4 Specific Permit-to-Work Responsibilities

5.4.1 Permit Requester

A permit requester is a person who is planning to carry out a particular work activity which requires a permit-to-work. The permit requester should undertake the planning requirements for the activity before requesting the permit-to-work from the authorised person, the permit issuer. This includes undertaking a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for the specific activity the permit is requested for.

5.4.2 Permit Issuer (Authorised Person)

The permit issuer is the authorised person responsible for issuing the permit to the permit receiver. The entity should provide the permit issuer with the necessary authority to issue and sign permits on their behalf.

The entity should ensure the permit-to-work system is properly resourced. Permit issuers need sufficient time to check site conditions, as a minimum, at the start and completion of tasks.

The permit issuer should make periodic visits to the work site to ensure the effective implementation of the permit system are being upheld. There is no set frequency for how often this needs to be done. The frequency will depend on the nature of the work; the criticality of the precautions taken.

The permit issuer should have the appropriate knowledge about the hazards associated with the relevant work activity, including but not limited to:

- All foreseeable hazards associated with the proposed job have been identified and adequately assessed;
- The control measures/precautions identified in the risk assessment are reducing the risk to ALARP which ensures the safety of the people and workplace;
- The precautions specified in permit to work are in place before work commences, including isolations and will remain effective while the permit remains in force through workplace inspection;
- Aware of the precautions taken, any additional precautions required, personal protective equipment to be used or worn, and any other procedures which are to be followed;
- Work activities that may interact or affect one another are clearly identified and either conflict avoided, or additional precautions included in the permit;

- People are aware of the permit's duration and action to be taken if the work is suspended;
- Copies of all issued permits are displayed at an appropriate location and in a consistent arrangement so that workplace personnel can readily see and take the necessary precautions;
- The workplace is examined when work is suspended and before it is restarted, and finally when the work is completed to ensure that it is in a safe condition;
- The shift handover procedure is properly followed;
- Any precautions and isolations are withdrawn at the end of the work unless they are cross-referenced to other permit activity;
- Acknowledge the close-out of the permit while verifying the scope of the permit and there is no potential hazards arising from the work completed;
- The potential permit interaction, to make sure that one activity under a permit-to-work does not create danger or pose risks for another, even if the other work does not require a permit-to-work.

5.4.3 Permit Receiver

The permit receiver is the competent person who requested the permit to be issued and is fully responsible for supervising the work activities being undertaken. The entity should ensure the permit receiver and the permit issuer **must not** be the same person.

The permit receiver should ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- They and the people working with them understand the operation of, and the consequences of non-compliance with the permit-to-work systems applicable to the areas in which they are responsible for work;
- Any necessary information, instruction or training is given to permit users, in the language understood by them, to ensure that they understand the permit-to-work systems and the specific hazards and precautions required for their work;
- The conditions and precautions specified in the permits are fully understood, implemented and effectively monitored;
- Work is stopped or suspended if conditions change or if the task needs to be altered;
- The permit issuer is informed, and the permit closed out when the work has been completed.

5.4.4 Permit Users

Permit user/s undertaking the work should ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- They are able to demonstrate a good understanding of the permit-to-work systems that are operated in any location in which they are working;
- They do not start work on any job requiring a permit until one has been authorised and issued, its contents understood and necessary precautions taken;

- The conditions and precautions specified in the permits issued to them, or for work in which they will be involved, are fully implemented and will continue to be effective throughout the duration of work;
- All the precautions and safety measures that the permits and instructions state they should take are strictly followed;
- If in any doubt, or if any circumstances or conditions change, they stop work, make the work area safe and get advice immediately.

5.4.5 Permit Controller

The entity must appoint a competent person to be the permit controller; If the number of activities requiring permits is high then the entity should consider appointing a dedicated person.

Effective supervision of the permit-to-work system can be diluted in the case of a large number of permits under the control of one person. The entity should have arrangements to identify very active periods and assess what steps are necessary to maintain the required level of supervision. This can be achieved by either limiting the number of active permits or by providing additional resource for supervision and co-ordination of permits.

5.5 Essential Elements of a Permit-to-Work System

5.5.1 Permit-to-Work Form

The permit-to-work form must be displayed in a prominent area at the location of the work site and contain the following, including but not limited to:

- Permit title - the name assigned to the specific work task being conducted;
- Permit number - the permit-to-work shall have a unique reference number and in this section shall make reference to other relevant permits or isolation certificates that interact with the planned work;
- Job location - the specific location that the work activities will be conducted;
- Description of work – a description of what the work activity is and its limitations;
- Permit validity – the specific start time and date the permit will cover and specific time and date the permit expires;
- Description of hazards identified – the details of hazards, including residual hazards associated with the work;
- Mandatory control measures and precautions – the people who carried out the precautions, for example, isolations, should sign that precautions have been taken;
- Protective equipment – details of protective equipment, including PPE that is required for the work;
- Authorisation – the authorised person, the permit issuer, signs the permit-to-work confirming that any isolations have been made and precautions taken and specifies the date and time duration of the permit;
- Acceptance – the permit receiver, signs the permit-to-work confirming understanding of work to be done, hazards involved and precautions required;

- Tool box talk – confirming permit information has been explained to all workers involved;
- Emergency arrangements – must be in place prior to the work commencing, see section 7.0 of this document for further information;
- Extension/shift handover procedures – signatures confirming checks have been made and that the work task and any plant/equipment remains safe to be worked upon, and new permit receiver and permit users made fully aware of hazards/precautions. A new time expiry is stated by the permit issuer at this time;
- Hand back – signed by the permit receiver certifying work completed. Signed by the permit issuer certifying the work is completed and any plant/equipment is ready for testing and recommissioning;
- Cancellation – certifying the work is completed, has been tested and any plant/equipment satisfactorily re-commissioned.

5.5.2 Permit-to-Work Suspension

Work may sometimes have to be suspended, including but not limited to:

- If there is an emergency;
- For operational reasons;
- While waiting for spares;
- If there is a change to the nature or scope of the work;
- Where there is conflict with another scope of work. It is important to remember that a suspended permit remains live until it is cancelled. This means that there may still be active isolations under a suspended PTW.

Suspended permits should be kept on the permit recording system. The condition in which the plant has been left and the consequences for other activities should be specified.

The work should not be restarted until the permit issuer has verified that it is safe to do so and has revalidated the permit or issued a new permit.

If work is left under a suspended permit, integrity of safety systems or the security of any isolation that has been made is important, and the plant should not be assumed to be safe for normal or other use.

5.5.3 Permit-to-Work Handover

If work is carried over to another shift, then a shift handover procedure should be in place. This handover procedure should ensure that the incoming shift is aware of any outstanding permit controlled jobs, the status of those jobs, and the status of the plant/equipment.

Work in progress should be left in a condition that can be reliably communicated to, and understood by, the oncoming shift. A permit log, permit file or display boards are ways of recording ongoing permits.

It is essential that there is good communication between incoming and the outgoing permit issuer and permit receivers. The incoming permit issuer signs to allow the continuation of a

permit and the permit receiver signs for the handover by confirming the understanding of the existing progress of the scope and precautions in place of the permit.

5.5.4 Permit-to-Work Hand back

The entity should ensure the hand back procedure includes confirmation of the following:

- The work been fully completed and confirmed by the permit receiver;
- The plant or equipment been returned to a safe condition and any isolations removed, and has been verified by the permit issuer responsible for signing off the permit;
- The authorised person, the permit issuer, in charge of operational activities acknowledged on the permit that the plant or equipment has been returned/delivered to the control of the production staff.

6 Training

Effective training is essential to achieve quality and consistency in the use of the permit-to-work system. The entity should provide training to all employees who take part in and contribute to the permit-to-the work system in languages and in a format that employees understand, including but not limited to:

- The principles of a permit-to-work system;
- When permits-to-work are required;
- An understanding of the types of permits, supporting certificates and other required documentation, for example, risk assessments and method statements;
- Responsibilities and competence requirements for signatories or authorised people within the permit-to-work system;
- Responsibilities of permit requester, issuer, receiver and users;
- Limitations and dependence on PTW to control work activities;
- Lessons from incidents associated with permits-to-work and findings from audit and review.

Training should focus on use of the permit-to-work system but must also ensure that the employees understand the working environment, the hazards associated with it, and the controls required to appropriately manage the risks presented by those hazards.

Periodic refresher training should be conducted to ensure employees competency is maintained, including but not limited to:

- Where training certification has expired;
- Where identified as part of a training needs analysis;
- Where risk assessment findings identify training as a measure to control risks;
- Where there is a change in Legal requirements;
- Where incident investigation findings recommend refresher training.

The entity must record and maintain accurate training records of OSH training provided to employees.

Further information on training can be found in OSHJ-GL-08: Training and Competence.

7 Emergency Preparedness and Response

If an emergency occurs, all permits-to-work shall be suspended until normal operations resume. The permit-to-work shall be re-issued prior to work activities commencing.

The entity shall ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- All work activities performed under a permit-to-work must have emergency arrangements in place prior to the commencement of the permit;
- The permit-to-work should be displayed and contain specific information on what to do in an emergency;
- Emergency response personnel are available who can take charge and make decisions on behalf of the entity during an emergency and liaise with emergency services~~;~~
- Emergency response personnel are available, who are familiar with the work area ensuring the prompt evacuation of the workplace in the event of a fire;
- Adequate firefighting, first aid and any rescue equipment identified as required, is available at the location prior to the work being conducted;
- Employees are trained in emergency response, including information of first aid arrangements and where first-aiders, first aid equipment and facilities are located;
- Employees are appointed as first aiders and available at each location and each working shift where work is being conducted.

Further information on first aid can be found in OSHJ-CoP-16: First Aid at Work.

Further information on developing an emergency plan can be found in OSHJ-CoP-18: Emergency Preparedness and Response.

8 References

OSHJ-CoP-01: Risk Management and Control

OSHJ-CoP-16: First Aid at Work

OSHJ-CoP-18: Emergency Preparedness and Response

OSHJ-GL-08: Training and Competence

9 Document Amendment Record

TITLE	Permit to Work for Hazardous Activities

DOCUMENT AMENDMENT RECORD			
Version	**Revision Date**	**Amendment Details**	**Pages Affected**
1	15 SEP 2021	New Document	N/A
2	02 JUL 2024	The document changed from a guideline to a code of practice. The document code was changed from OSHJ-GL-16 to OSHJ-CoP-34.	2,3,10,11
2	02 JUL 2024	Risk register Added	17
2	02 JUL 2024	Checklist Added	20

10 APPENDIX 1: Example of a PTW Form

Appendix 1: Example of a PTW Form

Permit Number:					
Location of Work:					
Scope of Work:					
Permit Valid From:	Time:		Date:		
Permit Valid To:	Time:		Date:		
The following services have been isolated					
	Yes/No	**Isolation of Systems**	**Name** (print)	**Name** (signature)	**Date**
For example, electricity					
Other:					
Risk Assessment (attached?)					
Control measures (explained to employees?)					
Other Precautions (public safety, traffic movement, etc)					
Tools and Equipment to be used (scaffold, PPE, etc)					
Emergency Procedures (in place?)					

Authorisation and Acceptance:

I confirm that I have verified the above information and ensured that the necessary precautions have been taken. It is safe to carry out the work as defined above and the permit information has been explained to all workers involved. I accept responsibility for this work.

Time:			
Permit Issuer	Name:	Signature:	Date:
Permit Receiver	Name:	Signature:	Date:

Hand Back and Cancellation: I confirm the work has been completed, all isolations reinstated, checked by myself and all persons under my control have been withdrawn.

Time:			
Permit Issuer	Name:	Signature:	Date:
Permit Receiver	Name:	Signature:	Date:

11 APPENDIX 2. Example of a Risk Register

Some manuals within Sharjah Occupational Safety and Health System include a sample risk register as an advisory document that entities can emulate. The examples listed in this sample may not be directly applicable to every entity; however, they serve as illustrative cases to enhance understanding of the methods used to evaluate activities within the entity, potential risks, and possible consequences. The sample demonstrates how to assess risks by calculating their likelihood and consequences.

Some manuals present this sample to emphasize the importance of risk monitoring, evaluation, and the implementation of appropriate control measures. It is unacceptable for an auditor from the Prevention and Safety Authority to find any entity engaging in hazardous activities without a thorough risk assessment process. We can anticipate and prevent workplace risks, and the risk monitoring process is not complex. Therefore, this appendix aims to provide a sample that aids in the monitoring, evaluation, and implementation of control measures, monitoring residual risks, and defining tasks and responsibilities for managing hazards.

Every government entity or private establishment has its unique nature of work and environment, which contain risks specific to its operations. Hence, each entity should develop its monitoring procedures based on this appendix. We can develop more detailed assessment tools beyond what this sample presents. As stipulated by Executive Council Resolution No. (15) of 2021 regarding the Sharjah Occupational Safety and Health System, employers are required to identify all foreseeable workplace hazards, assess the risk of injury or illness to workers, and implement consistent preventive measures to ensure workers' safety, health, and well-being. The same resolution also holds employers responsible for their employees, contractors, visitors, and anyone affected by the employer's activities. Therefore, this sample recommends including these individuals in the risk assessment process.

Activity/task	Dangers	Consequences	Existing control measures	Risk			Additional control measures	Residual risks			Executing person	Administrator: Date:
				L	C	R		L	C	R-R		
Hot Work	Fire, Burns	Property damage, injuries, fatalities	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Obtain hot work permit before commencing work. Implement fire prevention measures. Provide appropriate PPE and training. Ensure fire extinguishers are readily available.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Hot Work Supervisor	[Date]
Confined Space Entry	Entrapment, Toxic Atmospheres	Suffocation, poisoning, injuries, fatalities	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Complete confined space entry permit. Test air quality, provide ventilation, and use proper PPE. Implement lockout/tagout procedures. Ensure adequate rescue procedures are in place.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Confined Space Entry Supervisor	[Date]
Working at Heights	Falls	Injuries, fatalities	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Obtain work permit for working at heights. Use fall protection equipment such as harnesses and guardrails. Provide training on proper use and inspection of equipment. Conduct regular safety inspections.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Height Work Supervisor	[Date]
Hazardous Chemical Handling	Chemical Exposure, Spills	Burns, poisoning, environmental contamination	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Obtain work permit for handling hazardous chemicals. Provide appropriate training on safe handling and use of PPE. Implement spill containment and cleanup procedures.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Chemical Safety Officer	[Date]
Electrical Work	Electric Shock, Arc Flash	Burns, cardiac arrest, fatalities	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Obtain work permit for electrical work. Ensure proper de-energization and lockout/tagout procedures. Provide insulated tools and appropriate PPE. Conduct regular electrical safety inspections.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Electrical Safety Officer	[Date]

12 APPENDIX 3: Checklist

The checklist is used by Prevention and Safety Authority to monitor compliance levels during audit and inspection operations; it is not intended for use by government entities or private establishments.

Every code of practice or guideline published by the Prevention and Safety Authority within the Sharjah occupational safety and health system contains requirements that employers in the Emirate of Sharjah must comply with. Each manual includes an inspection checklist that summarizes the essential items used by the SPSA auditor to verify that government entities or private establishments comply with the manual's requirements. Auditors can add additional essential items as necessary. The inspection checklist also includes a manual reference for each essential item, as well as a sample of acceptable compliance evidence for each item. The SPSA's auditor may request additional compliance evidence based on the item's condition, as well as the severity and potential impact of non-compliance.

The SPSA's auditor uses the inspection checklist to provide a comprehensive report on the entity's status. We will use the same checklist to monitor manual standard violations. Non-compliance with these standards constitutes a violation of Executive Council Resolution No. 15 of 2021 regarding the Sharjah Occupational Safety and Health System. If the SPSA's auditor detects non-compliance, they can issue violations based on the approved violation list.

In this manual, the SPSA provides information and standards that employers conducting activities in the Emirate of Sharjah must adhere to. This is to ensure the safety of workers, property, and the environment. Adhering to the requirements of this manual helps improve the level of occupational safety and health at the workplace, and it shields private establishments from potential violations or financial penalties for non-compliance.

The Emirate of Sharjah's Executive Council Resolution stipulates that employers must exercise due diligence to ensure the safety and health of workers, contractors, visitors, and all those affected by the employer's activities. To avoid non-compliance, employers must ensure adherence to the Sharjah Occupational Safety and Health System requirements. Entities should develop their procedures and inspection checklists according to their activities, nature of work, and risk level.

Depending on recorded or reported incidents, and as necessary, the SPSA may amend the requirements in this manual. As a result, the attached inspection checklist may change. Occupational safety and health practitioners must stay up-to-date on published standards and any changes to the inspection checklist attached to each manual.

Audit/Inspection Checklist

Code Title	Permit to Work	Code No.	OSHJ-CoP-34	Rev. No.	1.0

Sr.	Checklist Item	Clause in the Code	Acceptable means of compliance
1.	Are the risk associated with the permit to work identified and assessed?	5.2: Planning and Risk Assessment	– Check Risk assessment
2.	Are the Permit work procedures done effectively by a competent group?	5.4.2, 5.4.3, 5.4.5, 5.5.4: Permit Issuer (Authorized Person), Permit Receiver, Permit Controller, Permit-to-Work Hand back	– Check permit of work – Check if the permit issuer and receiver isn't the same person
3.	Are the concerned employees trained in the use, risk, and safety measures related to permit to work?	6: Training	– Check OSH training records
4.	Does the emergency response plan cover the emergencies from the permit to work?	7:Emergency Preparedness and Response	– Check emergency preparedness plan – Verify the presence of displayed PTW – Verify the presence of firefighting equipment – Verify the presence of first aid kit & first aiders