

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH AWARDS 2018



A safe and healthy working environment boosts staff morale, says Mr Chang. PHOTO: TED CHEN

Staying vigilant

Greatearth pulls out all the stops to ensure the workplace remains incident-free

HAZEL TAN

AT GREATEARTH Corporation, making the workplace safer and protecting the well-being of its employees is the company's daily mission, says its executive director and chief executive officer, Mr Chang Chew Kient.

As one of Singapore's oldest and most established integrated building services companies, Greatearth has more than 150 years of history in engineering and construction.

Its competencies include property development, engineering, construction, as well as specialty services such as geo-technical foundation work and procurement.

The company won five awards at this year's Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Awards. UG M&E, Greatearth's mechanical and electrical engineering subsidiary, received a WSH Performance Award (Gold), while Greatearth Corporation, its construction subsidiary, was awarded a WSH Performance Award (Silver) and three SHARP (Safety and Health Award Recognition for Projects) awards — one for private condominium project GEM Residences, and the other two for HDB projects, Senja Heights N6 C12 and Senja Ridges N6 C15.

Greatearth is no stranger to WSH awards, having won numerous SHARP Awards for many of its outstanding projects including GEM Residences (2017), Marina Bay Sands (2010) and The Rochester (2010), a mixed-use development at one-north.

Dynamic process

"While awards are always a great pat on the back, as well as an endorsement that we have been doing is right, no number of awards, however, will guarantee zero incidents in the future. This means that when it comes to workplace safety, there is absolutely no resting on the laurels because every day is a day of vigilance, training and planning," says Mr Chang.

"Ensuring workplace safety is a very dynamic process. A worksite, for example, is ever evolving and possible hazards can emerge at every stage of work."

Greatearth's worksites often involve employees and sub-contractors working in potentially hazardous conditions, such as at

elevated heights or constrained spaces, and amid heavy machinery and equipment.

Mr Chang says: "These workplaces are susceptible to incidents and other work risks that may affect employee safety, business continuity and performance. Therefore, improving and achieving good workplace safety and health (WSH) performance is a critical success factor for us."

"In addition, a safe and healthy working environment boosts staff morale, and good WSH performance and standards enhance productivity by reducing business downtime."

The company's WSH framework is made up of six platforms: policy, system and structure, communication, education and training, key performance indicators and database, as well as rewards and recognition. This multi-pronged approach to WSH allows Greatearth to have clear goals and identify ways to work toward achieving them.

Because WSH is part of its workflow, it is taken into account at every stage of a project cycle, from design to construction to operations and maintenance.

Mr Chang says: "By designing with WSH in mind, many incidents and downtimes downstream can be avoided or eliminated; and during construction, operations and maintenance, everyone plays their part in adopting best WSH practices and upholding high WSH standards."

Extending WSH best practices

To drive home the importance of WSH and motivate employees to continuously uphold high WSH standards, their WSH performance is taken into consideration for their remuneration packages and career advancement. Employees are also recognised for their outstanding WSH performance at the company's annual Greatearth Safety Day.

Greatearth also extends its WSH best practices to its business partners such as sub-contractors and suppliers. Its integrated occupational safety and health programme, SmeSAFE@Greatearth, provides training support, resources and incentives to small and medium enterprise partners to help improve their WSH performance and motivate them to embark on the bizSAFE journey. To date, 99.5 per cent of Greatearth's contractors and sub-contractors have attained bizSAFE Level 3 and higher certifications.



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