

# Air Quality Health Index will remain higher than normal this week

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has recorded higher than normal pollution levels. At 4pm today (September 25), the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) at the Tuen Mun Air Quality Monitoring station reached 10+, corresponding to the "Serious" health risk category. According to the EPD's forecast, it is expected that the AQHI will remain higher than normal this week.

The weather in Hong Kong today is mainly fine with moderate northeasterly winds. Higher than normal levels of ozone and particulates have been recorded in the territory since noon. Hong Kong is being affected by an air mass with higher background pollutant concentrations. The sunshine enhances photochemical smog activity and the rapid formation of ozone and fine particulates in the Pearl River Delta region. The high level of ozone has also promoted the formation of nitrogen dioxide.

According to the Hong Kong Observatory, the weather this week will continue to be mainly fine with moderate easterly to northeasterly winds and there will be an easterly airstream next week. It is expected that pollution levels will remain higher than normal until the advent of the easterly airstream and stronger winds.

With a health risk category in the "Very High" range or above, children, the elderly and persons with existing heart or respiratory illnesses are advised to reduce physical exertion and outdoor activities to a minimum or avoid such activities. The general public is advised to reduce, or reduce to a minimum, outdoor physical exertion, and to reduce time staying outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic. As health effects of air pollutants may vary for individuals, persons who are in doubt or experience discomfort should seek advice from health-care professionals. The public may visit the Centre for Health Protection's website

([www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/460/3557.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/460/3557.html)) for more information on health effects of air pollution and relevant health advice.

The Education Bureau (EDB) urges all schools to visit the EDB's website for appropriate measures to safeguard students' health and take note of changes in the index. The relevant hyperlink is as follows:

[www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-activities/sch-activities-guidelines/index.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-activities/sch-activities-guidelines/index.html).

When the AQHI is at the "Very High" level, employers of outdoor workers performing heavy manual work are advised to assess the risk of outdoor work and take appropriate preventive measures to protect the health of their employees, such as reducing outdoor physical exertion and the time of their stay outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic. At the "Serious" level, employers of all outdoor workers are advised to assess the risk of outdoor work and take appropriate preventive measures to protect the health

of their employees.

Members of the public can check the current AQHI readings at the EPD's website ([www.aqhi.gov.hk/en.html](http://www.aqhi.gov.hk/en.html)) or by calling the hotline 2827 8541.