

## **Red flags hoisted at Clear Water Bay First Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 20) that due to inclement weather, red flags have been hoisted at Clear Water Bay First Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

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## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, May 20, 2019 is 105.5 (down 0.1 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, May 18, 2019 was 105.6 (up 0.2 against last Friday's index).

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## **Lifesaving services at Cafeteria Old Beach resume**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department has announced that the lifesaving services at Cafeteria Old Beach in Tuen Mun District resumed today (May 20). The lifesaving services at the beach were suspended earlier due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty.

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## Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (May 20) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, and that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From May 12 to 18, one community-acquired LD case was reported. The male patient, aged 82 with underlying illnesses, lives in Wah On House, Wah Fu (1) Estate, Southern District.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of May 18, 24 LD cases had been reported in 2019. In 2018 and 2017, there were 105 and 72 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems leading to stagnant water; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus which support breathing. People may get infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank,

wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
  1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
  2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
  3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
  4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
  5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

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## [Twenty-three building plans approved](#)

## in March

The Buildings Department approved 23 building plans in March, with seven on Hong Kong Island, seven in Kowloon and nine in the New Territories.

Of the approved plans, five were for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, 11 were for commercial developments, one was for factory and industrial development, and six were for community services developments.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on nine building projects which, when completed, will provide 155 809 square metres of gross floor area for domestic use involving 2 085 units, and 20 875 sq m of gross floor area for non-domestic use. The department has received notification of commencement of superstructure works for five building projects.

The department also issued 19 occupation permits, with three on Hong Kong Island, four in Kowloon and 12 in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the gross floor area for domestic use was 13 792 sq m involving 432 units, and 88 192 sq m was for non-domestic use.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in March totalled about \$5.3 billion.

In addition, 11 demolition consents involving 11 building structures were issued.

The department received 2 321 reports about unauthorised building works (UBWs) in March and issued 697 removal orders on UBWs.

The full version of the Monthly Digest for March can be viewed on the Buildings Department's homepage ([www.bd.gov.hk](http://www.bd.gov.hk)).