

CHP investigates influenza A outbreak at secondary school in Kowloon City

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 4) investigating an influenza A outbreak at a secondary school in Kowloon City, and again reminded the public to maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene against influenza.

The outbreak involves 20 female students aged 12 to 14 who have developed fever, cough, sore throat and runny nose since February 20. All of them sought medical attention. Among them, two students required hospitalisation and one was discharged following treatment. All patients are in a stable condition. The respiratory specimens of four students tested positive for influenza A upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and advised the school to adopt necessary infection control measures against respiratory tract infections. The school has been placed under medical surveillance.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "To prevent outbreaks of influenza and other respiratory infections, it is of prime importance that students with fever, regardless of the presence of respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. They should seek medical advice and avoid school till 48 hours after the fever has subsided. Schools should also measure and record students' body temperature properly."

Schools are reminded to follow the [Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases](#) on preventive and control measures as well as management of outbreaks, which should be reported to the CHP for prompt follow-up.

"The latest surveillance data showed that the local influenza activity has continued to decrease from the peak level in January but remained above the baseline threshold. We urge the community to continue heightening its vigilance against seasonal influenza. As young children are particularly affected in this influenza season, we appeal to parents who have not yet arranged vaccination for their children in this season to do so as soon as possible to strengthen their personal protection," the spokesman said.

Apart from children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are also urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. Medical advice should be sought promptly if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).

Three contractors convicted for illegally carrying out construction works on Sunday

Three contractors who illegally carried out construction works using powered mechanical equipment in Southern District on Sunday and generated noise nuisance were convicted and fined a total of \$35,000 at Eastern Magistrates' Courts on February 25 and today (March 4) for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) conducted a series of blitz operations in Southern District in August last year with a focus on combating works carried out illegally by construction companies in the district on Sunday. During the operation, it was found that some workers, when carrying out construction or renovation works at two schools, used powered mechanical equipment and generated noise. No construction noise permit (CNP) had been granted before the works commenced. After investigation and evidence gathering, the EPD prosecuted three construction and renovation works companies, which were the main contractor and sub-contractors involved in the cases, in accordance with the NCO. The companies are Tung Kee Construction Co Limited, Keung Lik Engineering Limited and REC Engineering Company Limited.

The spokesperson for the EPD explained that the NCO aims to protect the public from disturbance of rest. Members of the construction industry should carry out works during the daytime and non-general holidays as far as possible to minimise noise disturbance to the nearby residents. If any works procedures have to be conducted during the restricted hours (between 7pm and 7am on the following day, or at any time on a general holiday), a permit must be obtained from the EPD in advance. The construction works shall commence only when the CNP has been granted upon completion of assessment to support its compliance with regulatory requirements. The permit holder must also strictly comply with the requirements of the CNP. For example, only specified powered mechanical equipment can be used when carrying out the works and noise mitigation measures should be implemented. Otherwise, it constitutes an offence. The main contractor should also monitor the construction works carried out by its sub-contractors during restricted hours to ensure all relevant regulations are complied with, or it may also be held liable. Under

the NCO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.

[Import of poultry meat and products from Rebild Municipality in Denmark suspended](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (March 4) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about an outbreak of low pathogenic H5 avian influenza in Rebild Municipality, Denmark, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products, including poultry eggs, from the area with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that Hong Kong imported about 1 340 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 1 560 000 poultry eggs from Denmark last year.

"The CFS has contacted the Danish authorities over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE on avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

[An exceptionally warm February](#)

February 2019 was unseasonably warm in Hong Kong because the northeast monsoon over the south China coast was weaker than normal for most of the time in the month. The monthly mean temperature of 20.1 degrees, the monthly mean minimum temperature of 18.4 degrees and the monthly mean maximum temperature of 22.6 degrees, all the second highest on record in February, were 3.3 degrees, 3.4 degrees and 3.7 degrees above their corresponding normal figures respectively. Together with the well above normal temperatures in December 2018 and January 2019, Hong Kong also experienced the warmest winter on record from December 2018 to February 2019, with only three cold days, the fewest on record, and the winter mean temperature reaching 19.1 degrees, 2.1 degrees above the normal figure. February 2019 was also wetter than usual. The monthly rainfall was 68.7 millimetres, about 26 per cent above the normal figure of 54.4 millimetres in February. The accumulated rainfall recorded in the first two months of the year was 73.4 millimetres, a

7 per cent decrease compared to the normal figure of 78.9 millimetres for the same period.

The northeast monsoon brought mostly cloudy weather to Hong Kong on the first day of February 2019. As the northeast monsoon moderated, local weather improved gradually with sunny periods on the next three days, bringing warm weather to Hong Kong on February 3 and 4. The light wind conditions on February 4 led to coastal fog in the morning, but local winds picked up at night when a fresh easterly airstream reached the coast of Guangdong.

With the easterly winds over the coast of Guangdong gradually replaced by a warm maritime airstream, the weather in Hong Kong became warm again with sunny periods and coastal mist from February 5 to 8. February 6, 7 and 8 this year were the warmest second, third and fourth days of the Lunar New Year on record, with the maximum temperatures recorded at the Hong Kong Observatory on these three days rising to 24.9 degrees, 25.8 degrees and 25.1 degrees respectively. The mean temperature of the first three days of the Lunar New Year also set a new record high of 21.8 degrees. With a strong northeast monsoon reaching the coast of Guangdong at around noon on February 8, local weather turned cloudy and cooler with a few rain patches that afternoon. Similar weather followed on the next three days.

The northeast monsoon moderated on February 12, leading to generally fine weather that afternoon and the next day. Due to a ridge of high pressure over the coast of southeastern China, local winds strengthened from the east in the night of February 13. A relatively humid easterly airstream affected the south China coast from February 14 to 16, bringing a few light rain patches in the morning and sunny periods in the afternoon.

As the easterly winds picked up again on February 17, the weather became cooler with a few light rain patches. A trough of low pressure over the coastal areas of Guangdong brought thundery showers to Hong Kong on February 18 and 19. The showers were heavy in the morning of February 19, leading to the issuance of the first Amber Rainstorm Warning in the year. This was also the second earliest Amber Rainstorm Warning since the rainstorm warning system commenced its operation in 1992. More than 30 millimetres of rainfall were recorded in various areas of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the Islands.

A warm and humid maritime airstream brought foggy weather and sunny intervals to Hong Kong on February 20 and 21. The visibility in Victoria Harbour fell below 1,000 metres in the morning of February 21. A cold front moved across the coastal areas of Guangdong in the small hours of February 22. Its associated strong northeast monsoon brought cool and rainy weather to Hong Kong on February 23 and 24. The weather was rather cool in the morning of February 24 with the temperature at the Hong Kong Observatory dropping to a minimum of 14.1 degrees, the lowest of the month. Local weather became brighter with temperatures rising progressively towards the end of the month as the northeast monsoon abated. The weather was rather warm on February 28 with the maximum temperature at the Hong Kong Observatory soaring to 26.7 degrees that afternoon, the highest of the month.

One tropical cyclone occurred over the South China Sea and the western North Pacific in February 2019.

Details of issuance and cancellation of various warnings/signals in February are summarised in Table 1. Monthly meteorological figures and departures from normal for February are tabulated in Table 2.

Suspected red tide sighted at Golden 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 (March 4) that due to a suspected red tide sighting, the red flag has been hoisted at Golden Beach in Tuen Mun District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach until further notice.