

CHP reminds public on precautions against upcoming cold weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (December 7) reminded the public, particularly the elderly and people with chronic illnesses, to adopt appropriate measures to protect their health in view of the cold weather in Hong Kong early next week.

A spokesman for the CHP said that cold weather can easily trigger or exacerbate diseases, especially among the elderly and persons suffering from heart disease, respiratory illness or other chronic illnesses.

"Elderly people have less insulating fat beneath their skin to keep them warm and their body temperature control mechanism may be weaker. Their body may not be able to appropriately respond to the cold weather," the spokesman said.

Some senior persons may have decreased mobility, which can in turn slow down their ability to generate and conserve body heat. Chronic illnesses, such as hypertension, diabetes and endocrine disorders, may undermine the health of elderly people and lower their metabolic rate, subsequently causing their body to generate less heat.

The CHP reminded the public, in particular the elderly and persons with chronic illnesses, to adopt the following preventive measures:

- Take note of the weather forecast. Wear warm clothing, including hats, scarves, gloves and socks accordingly;
- Consume sufficient food to ensure adequate calorie intake;
- Perform regular exercise to facilitate blood circulation and heat production;
- Stay in a warm environment and avoid prolonged outdoor exposure;
- Use heaters with care and maintain adequate indoor ventilation; and
- Seek medical advice if feeling unwell.

In addition, the public should avoid alcoholic beverages.

"Drinking alcohol cannot keep you warm. Alcohol accelerates the loss of body heat through dilated blood vessels, resulting in chilling instead," the spokesman said.

"Parents should ensure that babies are sufficiently warm, but it is also important to keep babies lightly clothed to avoid overheating them," the spokesman added.

Parents should observe the following safety measures when putting their children to bed:

- Keep the room well ventilated and with a comfortable temperature;
- Always place babies on their back to sleep. Babies usually sleep well without a pillow;
- Place babies on a firm and well-fitted mattress to sleep. Avoid soft objects and loose bedding;
- Leave their head, face and arms uncovered during sleep; and
- Let babies sleep in a cot placed in the parents' room and near their bed.

Members of the public are advised to take heed of the following advice to reduce the risk of getting influenza and respiratory tract infections:

- Maintain adequate rest, a balanced diet and regular physical activity, and avoid stress and do not smoke;
- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good hand hygiene via proper handwashing or use of alcohol-based handrub;
- Ensure good ventilation;
- Wear a face mask in the event of influenza-like symptoms, while taking care of patients and when visiting hospitals or clinics;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper in a lidded rubbish bin and wash hands immediately afterwards;
- Seek medical advice when feeling unwell, and stay at home; and
- Receive seasonal influenza vaccination, which is suitable for all persons aged 6 months or above except those with known contraindications.

Food-borne diseases, particularly those linked to hot pot cuisine, are also common in cold weather. The following preventive measures should be taken:

- Wash hands before handling and consuming food;
- Do not patronise unlicensed vendors or those with poor hygienic standards while selecting food;
- Wash and cook all food thoroughly;
- Vegetables should be washed thoroughly in clean running water before cooking and consumption. When appropriate, scrub vegetables with hard surfaces with a clean brush to remove dirt and substances, including pesticide residues and contaminants, from the surface and crevices;
- Shrimps should be fully cooked by cooking them until the shells turn red and the flesh turns white and opaque;
- For shellfish like scallops and geoduck, scrub the shells thoroughly and remove internal organs;
- Most hot pot ingredients should be stored in a refrigerator at 4 degrees Celsius or below, while frozen food should be stored in a freezer at -18 degrees C or below;
- Never use raw eggs as a dipping sauce for hot pot; and
- Use different sets of chopsticks to handle raw and cooked food to avoid cross-contamination.

In addition, the public should not use charcoal as cooking fuel in poorly ventilated areas, especially indoors, to avoid harmful exposure to carbon monoxide (CO) and prevent CO poisoning. While using other kinds of fuel, the public should also ensure adequate ventilation.

For more health information, the public may call the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111) or visit the [CHP's website](#) and [Facebook Fanpage](#).

The public may also call Dial-a-Weather (1878 200) or visit the website of the [Hong Kong Observatory](#) for the latest weather information and forecast, or its page on [Weather Information for Senior Citizens](#).

Temporary closure of some LCSD leisure and sports facilities

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (December 7) that the following leisure and sports facilities will be temporarily closed:

(a) The turf pitch and golf driving range at Wo Yi Hop Road Sports Ground in Kwai Tsing District will be temporarily closed from December 9 to 30 for turf maintenance works, while the running track will remain open. During the closure period, the public may use similar facilities at Tsing Yi Northeast Park in the same district or Tuen Mun Golf Centre.

(b) The turf pitch at Tin Shui Wai Sports Ground in Yuen Long District will be temporarily closed from December 14 to January 3, 2019 for turf maintenance works, while the running track will remain open. During the closure period, the public may use similar facilities at Yuen Long Stadium in the same district.

(c) The turf pitch at Kwai Chung Sports Ground in Kwai Tsing District will be temporarily closed from December 18 to January 7, 2019 for turf maintenance works, while the running track will remain open. During the closure period, the public may use similar facilities at Tsing Yi Northeast Park in the same district.

(d) The turf pitch at Tsing Yi Sports Ground in Kwai Tsing District will be temporarily closed from December 21 to January 10, 2019 for turf maintenance works, while the running track will remain open. During the closure period, the public may use similar facilities at Tsing Yi Northeast Park in the same district.

(e) The turf pitch at Tai Po Sports Ground in Tai Po District will be temporarily closed from December 17 to 30 for turf maintenance works, while

the running track will remain open. During the closure period, the public may use similar facilities at Kwong Fuk Park Football Pitch, Kwong Fuk Football Ground in the same district or North District Sports Ground.

(f) The turf pitch at Tuen Mun Tang Shiu Kin Sports Ground in Tuen Mun District will be temporarily closed from December 25 to January 14, 2019 for turf maintenance works.

(g) The turf pitch at Fanling Recreation Ground in North District will be temporarily closed from January 2 to 15, 2019 for turf maintenance works. During the closure period, the public may use Kwu Tung Grass Soccer Pitch in the same district.

(h) The turf pitch at Yuen Long Stadium in Yuen Long District will be temporarily closed from January 4 to 24, 2019 for turf maintenance works, while the running track will remain open. During the closure period, the public may use similar facilities at Tin Shui Wai Sports Ground in the same district.

For the most up-to-date closure schedules of the above leisure and sports facilities, the public may refer to the notices at the venues or contact venue staff directly.

Six illegal workers jailed

Six illegal workers comprising four Vietnamese and two Bangladeshis were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (December 6).

During joint operations conducted by the Immigration Department (ImmD) and the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion" on February 6, enforcement officers raided a car park in Kwai Chung. Two male Bangladeshi illegal workers, aged 35 and 46, were arrested. When intercepted they were conveying goods. Upon identity checking, they produced for inspection recognisance forms issued by the ImmD, which prohibit them from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that they were non-refoulement claimants. An employer suspected of employing the illegal workers was arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

In addition, during operation "Twilight" on December 4, ImmD investigators raided restaurants in Fanling and Sai Wan Ho. Two male and two female Vietnamese illegal workers, aged 27 to 47, were arrested. When intercepted they were washing dishes. Upon identity checking, one man produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. Furthermore, one man and two women were also suspected of using and being in possession of a forged identity card. In addition, one man was also suspected of using and being in possession of a

false instrument. Two employers suspected of employing the illegal workers were arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The six illegal workers were charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. They were sentenced to imprisonment ranging from 15 months to 22 months and two weeks. In addition, one male and two female Vietnamese illegal workers were also charged with one count of using a forged Hong Kong identity card and were sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of 18 months' imprisonment. In addition, one male Vietnamese was also charged with one count of possessing false instrument and was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment of which part of the sentence is to run consecutively, making a total of 17 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases. It is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and

identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase, and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Hong Kong Monetary Authority Exchange Fund Bills Tender Results

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

Hong Kong Monetary Authority Exchange Fund Bills Tender Results:

Tender date	: December 7, 2018
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: M1805
Issue date	: December 10, 2018
Maturity date	: January 2, 2019
Amount applied	: HK\$3,300 MN
Amount allotted	: HK\$800 MN
Average yield accepted	: 1.65 PCT
Highest yield accepted	: 1.70 PCT
Pro rata ratio	: About 14 PCT
Average tender yield	: 1.92 PCT

EMSD announces latest sampling results for legionella at fresh water cooling towers

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (December 7) announced that the department tested 117 water samples collected from cooling towers in 108 buildings in its routine inspections in November this year. None of them was detected to have a total legionella count at or above the upper threshold, which is 1 000 colony-forming units per millilitre. The

latest statistics are set out in Annex 1.

The EMSD also announced the locations of buildings which were served with nuisance notices during the preceding three-month period as the total legionella count was found in the fresh water cooling towers to be equal to or above the upper threshold. Details can be found in Annex 2. The EMSD publishes the latest statistics of the above information on a half-monthly basis on its website (www.emsd.gov.hk/en/other_regulatory_services/cooling_towers/water_sampling/index.html).

The EMSD reminds the owners of fresh water cooling towers that they have the responsibility to design, operate and maintain cooling towers properly. They should arrange regular inspections, timely maintenance and periodic testing of the water quality in their cooling towers in accordance with the Code of Practice for Fresh Water Cooling Towers issued by the department to prevent the proliferation of legionella.