

Temporary suspension of fresh water supply in part of Southern District

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following special announcement as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The Water Supplies Department announced today (October 18) that owing to a faulty valve in a water main at Tsung Man Street, Aberdeen, the fresh water supply to part of Southern District has been suspended since 11am today.

The suspension affects all premises in Aberdeen, Tin Wan Estate, Shek Pai Wan Estate and the western part of Wong Chuk Hang (west of Yip Hing Street and Nam Long Shan Road).

Repair work is being urgently carried out and normal supply is expected to resume at 6pm today.

Return of requisition forms urged

The Rating and Valuation Department issued letters today (October 18) to remind rates and/or government rent payers who have not yet responded to the requisition forms (RIA) issued to them in August to complete and return them as soon as possible.

The rental information collected will be used to prepare a new round of general revaluation.

"Whether premises are vacant, let or owner-occupied, rates and/or government rent payers should complete and return the forms once received. They can also choose to complete and return the forms by using the Electronic Submission of Forms service provided at the department's website (www.rvd.gov.hk)," a spokesman for the department said.

Anyone who knowingly makes a false statement or refuses to furnish particulars requested in the form commits an offence and faces respective maximum fines of \$25,000 or \$10,000 and also a fine equivalent to three times their rates and/or government rent undercharged.

Rates and/or government rent payers are reminded to affix sufficient postage if they return the forms by post to ensure timely and successful postal delivery.

Rates and/or government rent payers who need help in completing the

forms can call the numbers printed on the forms or visit the department at 15/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon. The department's website also provides answers to commonly asked questions on completing the form.

LD launches exhibition on Employment Ordinance and Minimum Wage Ordinance

Members of the public are invited to visit an exhibition on the Employment Ordinance and the Minimum Wage Ordinance to be held by the Labour Department in Yau Tong on October 20 and 21.

The exhibition will feature the main provisions of the Employment Ordinance and the Minimum Wage Ordinance, as well as good human resource management measures, employment rights and benefits for foreign domestic helpers. Related publications and souvenirs will be distributed and promotional videos will be shown.

The exhibition will be held at Sales Venue C2, 1/F, Lei Yue Mun Plaza, 80 Lei Yue Mun Road, Yau Tong, from 11am to 6pm. Admission is free.

Speech by SLW at International Conference on "Social Welfare Policy, Practice, Research and Education: Public Engagement and Social Impact" (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-king, at the opening ceremony of the International Conference on "Social Welfare Policy, Practice, Research and Education: Public Engagement and Social Impact" organised by the Department of Social Work of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) this morning (October 18):

Professor Chiu Chi-yue (Dean of Social Science, CUHK), Professor Steven Ngai Sek-yum (Chairperson, Department of Social Work, CUHK), Professor Lam Ching-man (Chairperson of Conference Organising Committee), distinguished guests,

ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning everyone. May I begin by saying how pleased I am to be here today, and have the opportunity to catch up with old friends, and to meet more new friends from overseas, sharing the same passion in social welfare.

Ever since I took up the appointment of Secretary for Labour and Welfare last July, overseeing labour and welfare policies has become my major responsibility. With this portfolio, I am tasked to safeguard the rights and benefits of employees, and the well-being of the underprivileged.

As those living in Hong Kong would know, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong announced her second Policy Address last Wednesday (October 10). Quite a significant portion of the address was dedicated to the betterment of social welfare in Hong Kong. Apart from those issues covered in the media most frequently, i.e. the extension of maternity leave and the abolishment of the offsetting mechanism between the Mandatory Provident Fund and severance payment or long service payment, there are numerous items included in the Policy Address and the Policy Agenda booklet. Because of the fact that the Policy Address is longer than 60 000 words, most people only rely on the media reports, which mainly cover the controversial issues. That is why our Chief Executive has asked people to read her policy address. I guess most academics do know that it is more reliable to refer to the original texts instead on relying on the media reports. I have to say that even reading the Policy Address and the Policy Agenda will not be enough. There would be more details about the various labour and welfare policy initiatives that you can find in the Legislative Council Panel papers.

Like everywhere else in the world, labour and welfare policies can be quite controversial. In the past week, I heard comments from both sides, i.e. some representatives from the business side are complaining that I am too inclined to the labour side, while some others are complaining that I am too inclined towards the business side. Probably, this means that the Government position is just balanced and right.

These balanced positions are basically results of public engagement. By providing a platform for citizens and experts to engage in dialogues, divides can be bridged, and hopefully conflicting parties can meet halfway to have a win-win outcome. I believe that it is my job to weigh all the arguments, analyse them and decide on the right policy directions.

Of course, with the many pressing issues in labour and welfare, we still have a lot of work ahead of us. But taking note from the title of our Chief Executive's policy address, we will continue to "strive ahead and rekindle hope" for the citizens of Hong Kong. With the concerted efforts of the local community, academia, private sector and government, we can most certainly make Hong Kong a harmonious and inclusive society for all.

Last but not least, I wish the conference every success. The wisdom and knowledge of the participants will definitely inspire us to shape better social welfare policies, and make Hong Kong a better place to live in. Thank you.

SWD launches Information Website for RCHDs

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (October 18) launched the Information Website for Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities (RCHDs) (rchdinfo.swd.gov.hk), which is a dedicated website offering service information of all RCHDs licensed or issued with certificates of exemption under the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance.

A spokesman for the SWD said that the website has been developed with a view to enhancing transparency through enabling the public to browse service information of all RCHDs in Hong Kong. Equipped with a search function, the website provides various types of information about more than 310 RCHDs in respect of their licences/certificates of exemption, services, fees, staffing, facilities and service performance, including records of warning or conviction resulting from non-compliances under the relevant ordinance and/or code of practice. Information on whether the RCHDs have participated in the Service Quality Group Scheme is also available. Photographs and detailed information of chargeable items as provided by these RCHDs are also uploaded to the website.

"Following the launch of the Elderly Information Website in 2017, the SWD today launched the Information Website for RCHDs to enhance the transparency of service information in response to public concern about the service quality of residential care homes. The website enables the public to compare the services provided by different RCHDs so as to make informed choices," the spokesman said.

The spokesman added that after the launch of the website, the SWD will keep in view its usage and explore areas for improvement. To ensure that the website contains the latest information, persons-in-charge of the RCHDs may download the Information Updating Form from the website at any time for submission of updated information to the SWD. The department will also remind these persons-in-charge on a regular basis of their responsibility to provide the latest fee schedules for uploading to the website for public access.