

# Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (June 4) 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 27 to June 2, two community-acquired LD cases were reported. Both patients have underlying illnesses.

The first patient, a 70-year-old man, lives in Tower 3, Park Central, 9 Tong Tak Street, Sai Kung District, while the second patient, an 85-year-old woman, lives in Tat Cheung House, Po Tat Estate, Po Lam Road, Kwun Tong 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 June 2, 21 LD cases had been reported in 2018. In 2017 and 2016, there were 72 and 75 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 these devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not tap water. Also, clean and maintain them regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant

water. 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;
- Remove strainers in water taps and shower heads quarterly for cleaning;
- 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 they need to be changed periodically;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute the 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 medical advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile (not distilled or tap) water to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain them 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. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
  1. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
  2. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
  3. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
  4. 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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**Communications Authority makes available 5 GHz shared band for provision of higher speed public**

# mobile services

The following is issued on behalf of the Communications Authority:

The Communications Authority (CA) announced today (June 4) its decision to make available 580 MHz of spectrum in the 5 GHz band (consisting of four sub-bands of frequencies in 5150 – 5250 MHz, 5250 – 5350 MHz, 5470 – 5725 MHz and 5725 – 5850 MHz) (the 5 GHz Shared Band) for the provision of public mobile services on a shared basis, as well as the associated regulatory and licensing regime.

"The CA's decision will enable Hong Kong to become one of the first few economies in the world to adopt advanced mobile technologies, such as Licensed Assisted Access, in the 5 GHz Shared Band for the provision of higher speed public mobile services. With a total bandwidth of 580 MHz, this represents a significant addition to the existing total capacity of the 552 MHz of spectrum in the sub-3 GHz bands already assigned to mobile network operators (MNOs). Mobile users will stand to benefit from the increased service quality and capacity to be provided by MNOs through the use of the 5 GHz Shared Band," a spokesman for the CA said.

The CA conducted a public consultation in February 2018 on its proposal to make available the 5 GHz Shared Band for the provision of public mobile services on a shared basis. The proposal received general support from the industry.

"With immediate effect, MNOs may apply to the CA for the use of the band concerned on a shared basis to provide public mobile services through necessary amendments to their unified carrier licences," the spokesman said.

"The CA has been actively exploring ways to make available additional spectrum for the provision of public mobile services. The CA will continue to closely monitor the market and technology developments and will make available other suitable spectrum in a timely manner to further enhance the development of the mobile industry in Hong Kong for the benefits of our mobile users," the spokesman added.

For details of the CA's decision on the use of the 5 GHz Shared Band for the provision of public mobile services, please refer to the CA Statement published by the CA today, which is available at the CA's website:

[www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/statement/en/upload/451/ca\\_statements20180604\\_en.pdf](http://www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/statement/en/upload/451/ca_statements20180604_en.pdf).

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# **Ombudsman probes Government's handling of two trees in front of Tang Chi Ngong Building of University of Hong Kong**

The following is issued on behalf of the Office of The Ombudsman:

The Ombudsman, Ms Connie Lau, today (June 4) announced her Office's initiation of a direct investigation to examine whether there was maladministration in the Government's decisions and actions in respect of its felling of two trees in front of Tang Chi Ngong Building of the University of Hong Kong on May 20, 2018.

The felling of the two banyan trees by the Lands Department (LandsD) has attracted wide media coverage and public debate. Some criticised that the departments concerned had not taken due care of the health conditions of the two trees, nor had they sufficiently consulted relevant experts and the local community.

In this light, The Ombudsman has decided to investigate whether the decisions and actions of the departments concerned, namely LandsD, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) and the Tree Management Office (TMO) of the Development Bureau, were in line with the relevant policies and procedures. This direct investigation will cover:

- (1) how LandsD had looked after the two trees, and whether its decision to fell the trees had sufficient grounds;
- (2) the role and involvement of the TMO in the incident;
- (3) whether the HAD had duly assisted in conducting local consultation; and
- (4) whether there are inadequacies and areas for improvement on the part of the departments concerned.

Back in June 2016, the Office of The Ombudsman published two direct investigation reports entitled "Government's Handling of Four Stonewall Trees along Bonham Road" and "Government's Tree Management Regime and Practices", and made a number of recommendations to the Government for improvement. The Office has been monitoring the progress of implementation of those recommendations by the departments concerned.

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## **Red flags hoisted at several beaches**

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 (June 4) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Stanley Main Beach, Shek O Beach and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; Silverstrand Beach, 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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## **CE attends dragon boat race event in Tsuen Wan (with photos/video)**

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, accompanied by the Chairman of the Tsuen Wan District Council (TWDC), Mr Chung Wai-ping, and the Vice Chairman of TWDC, Mr Wong Wai-kit, as well as District Officer (Tsuen Wan), Miss Jenny Yip, attended the 2018 Tsuen Wan Dragon Boat Race at Tsuen Wan Promenade this afternoon (June 3), at which she watched a race and presented prizes to the winners. It has been the sixth Tsuen Wan Dragon Boat Race since it was held again in 2013. With the participation of more than 120 teams from Hong Kong, Macao, Guangdong and overseas, the race attracted many members of the public to watch at the promenade, creating a joyful atmosphere. Mrs Lam toured the stalls at the venue on traditional food, local youth service, social enterprises and rehabilitation service for mental illness. In particular, the stall of Hong Kong Children and Youth Services was manned by young people of ethnic minorities in the district. Noting that Hong Kong is an inclusive society, Mrs Lam encouraged them to take part in more district and Chinese traditional cultural activities to better integrate into the Hong Kong society.

Before attending the activity, she dropped by the Tsuen Wan Sports Centre which will be commissioned soon. Designed and constructed by the developer of an adjacent private housing estate, the fully-equipped sports centre has a total area of about 12 000 square metres. Its multi-purpose main arena, with a secondary arena as well, has a seating capacity of about 1 900 persons, enabling the staging of major local and international sports events. It also features the district's first public indoor play room for children and an outdoor climbing wall. The sports centre is expected to be commissioned in the third quarter of this year.

"I took part in the planning of this project and other development projects in Tsuen Wan while I was serving as the Secretary for Development. I am pleased and excited to see that the sports centre will be commissioned soon. The new sports centre of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department is set to further enhance the leisure and sports facilities for residents of New Territories West and enable the hosting of more major sports competitions and activities in the district, providing better quality of life for residents," Mrs Lam said.

