

May 31 deadline for proposals to alter rateable values

The Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) today (May 24) reminded the public that proposals to alter the rateable value of properties from April 1 this year must be served on the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation by May 31. Proposals served after May 31 will not be accepted.

Proposals should be made on the specified form (R20A) and be served by post or in person. The public can also lodge proposals on an electronic form (e-R20A) using the Electronic Submission of Forms service provided on the department's website. Proposals sent by fax are not acceptable.

Notwithstanding the lodging of a proposal, rates and rent payers must pay rates and government rent by the last day for payment shown on the demand notes. The RVD will inform the proposers of its decisions before December 1. Any changes in rates and government rent payable resulting from such decisions will date back to April 1 this year and any overpayment will be adjusted in subsequent demands.

For enquiries, please call 2152 0111.

Hong Kong ranked world's second most competitive economy

Hong Kong ranked second globally in the International Institute for Management Development's (IMD) World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY) 2018.

A Government spokesperson said today (May 24), "The Hong Kong SAR Government is committed to enhancing the competitiveness and vibrancy of our economy. The WCY again recognised that Hong Kong is one of the most competitive economies in the world."

Among the four main competitiveness factors of the WCY, HK maintained the top rank in "Government efficiency" and "Business efficiency", both for the fourth consecutive year. "Economic performance" climbed up from 11th to 9th on the back of above-trend economic growth. Yet, HK's ranking in "Infrastructure" fell from 20th to 23rd.

The spokesperson further said, "Amid the fierce competition from other economies, it is of utmost importance for us to consolidate Hong Kong's competitive edges, including the fine tradition of the rule of law, an open and free market, an efficient public sector, and a robust institutional

framework. The Government is also dedicated to taking up a more proactive role as a "promoter" and "facilitator" and will promote diversified economic growth and enhance our human capital from a forward-looking and strategic perspective, with a view to broadening the economic base."

The spokesperson added, "The Government will strive to develop innovation and technology (I&T) as the new engine of economic growth. Substantial resources have been allocated in recent years to upgrade technological infrastructure, build a vibrant ecosystem for startups, and pool and nurture more technology talent in Hong Kong. A wide range of tax and other measures have been rolled out in the first Policy Address and Budget of the current-term Government to support the development of various industries and improve the business environment. These measures clearly demonstrate the Administration's determination to further strengthen our competitiveness."

"In addition, following the shift in global economic gravity from West to East, China and Asia will continue to be the key driver of the global economy. Hong Kong can play a unique role in the National 13th Five-Year Plan, the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area development. These major initiatives will provide new and continuous impetus for Hong Kong's economy."

The WCY 2018 released by IMD today assessed each economy on four competitiveness factors: "Economic performance", "Government efficiency", "Business efficiency" and "Infrastructure", each consisting of five sub-factors. Among the 63 economies assessed, the US ranked first, Hong Kong second, followed by Singapore, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

[CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot weather](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (May 24) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

"The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

"The obese, the sick, including those with heart disease or high blood pressure, the old and the young are more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or late afternoon;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day.

If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable, and start work slowly and pick up the pace gradually. Get into a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index remains high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear loose long-sleeved clothing made of close-woven fabrics;
- Wear a wide brim hat or use an umbrella;
- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above. Apply liberally and reapply after swimming or sweating; and
- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

If symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

The public may get more information from the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.

Assess the risk of heat stroke to employees

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force, they should assess the risk of heat stroke to their employees and adopt effective preventive measures such as providing cool drinking water, setting up temporary sunshade and providing mechanical aids to reduce physical exertion of employees. Employees should drink water regularly and be mindful of their physical condition. If early heat stroke symptoms such as headache and thirst appear, they should inform their supervisors and seek medical help immediately.

Very Hot Weather Warning issued

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning.

To prevent heat stroke, avoid prolonged activities outdoors.

If engaged in outdoor work or activities, wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes. Stay in shaded areas as much as possible.

Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you feel sick, consult a doctor right away.