

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, October 8, 2018 is 105.5 (up 0.3 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, October 6, 2018 was 105.2 (down 0.2 against last Friday's index).

Regulating actions taken in accordance with Contractor Management Handbook

The Development Bureau (DEVB) has taken regulating actions in accordance with the Contractor Management Handbook against contractors concerned for construction issues associated with Hung Hom Station, To Kwa Wan Station and Exhibition Centre Station under the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) Project implemented by the MTR Corporation Limited.

A spokesman for the DEVB said today (October 8), "In 2001, the Government promulgated the Contractor Management Handbook to monitor the performance of public works contractors and suppliers. The Handbook specifies circumstances that may lead to the taking of regulating actions, the guidelines and procedures on taking regulating actions and the possible regulating actions. If a contractor is found or suspected to have committed serious poor performance in any public or private sector works contract, the DEVB can take appropriate regulating action against the contractor in accordance with established procedures. Regulating actions include suspension from tendering, downgrading to probationary status, demotion to a lower group, or removal from the relevant Lists of Approved Contractors for Public Works and of Approved Suppliers of Materials and Specialist Contractors for Public Works (Approved Lists).

"Based on the information available, including the contractors' representations and the relevant circumstances at Hung Hom Station, To Kwa Wan Station and Exhibition Centre Station of the SCL Project, the DEVB has decided to, under the prevailing mechanism, take regulating actions against contractors concerned."

Details of the regulating actions are as follows:

1. For the construction issues associated with Hung Hom Station, Leighton Contractors (Asia) Limited is suspended from tendering for all works categories under which it is listed on the Approved Lists for a period of 12 months effective from October 8, 2018.

2. For the construction issues associated with To Kwa Wan Station, both of the joint venture participants, Samsung C & T Corporation and Hsin Chong Construction Company Limited, are suspended from tendering for all works categories under which they are listed on the Approved Lists for a period of four months effective from October 8, 2018.

3. For the construction issues associated with Exhibition Centre Station, both of the joint venture participants, Leighton Contractors (Asia) Limited and China State Construction Engineering (Hong Kong) Limited, are suspended from tendering for the works categories of "Buildings (Group C)" and "Roads and Drainage (Group C)" for a period of three months. The suspension for Leighton Contractors (Asia) Limited will take effect upon expiry of the suspension period relating to Hung Hom Station (as mentioned in item (i) above) and the suspension period for China State Construction Engineering (Hong Kong) Limited will be effective from October 8, 2018.

In regard to the regulating action taken in relation to item (i) above, the Government reserves the right to take further regulating actions. In case more information on the construction issues associated with Hung Hom Station is available in future, the DEVB will review the situation and, if necessary, recommend and take further appropriate regulating actions.

[Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (October 8) 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 September 30 to October 6, two community-acquired LD cases were reported. They are:

1. A female patient, aged 81 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Block B, Shun Lee Building, 220 Ferry Street, Yau Tsim Mong District; and
2. A male patient, aged 58 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Mainway Court, 15-33 Kwong Wa Street, Yau Tsim Mong 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 October 6, 81 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:

1. Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
2. Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
3. 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;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- 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 (μm) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- 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-µm 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.

Suspected case tests negative for MERS-CoV

The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health today (October 8) reported that the suspected case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) pending results yesterday (October 7), upon preliminary testing, tested negative for MERS Coronavirus.

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

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (October 8) announced that the department tested 107 water samples collected from cooling towers in 94 buildings in its routine inspections in September this year. Five samples were 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 cooling towers in which the five samples were collected in September

are located at 17-19 Electric Road, North Point; 386 Portland Street, Mong Kok; 70 Fa Yuen Street, Mong Kok; 49-51 Woosung Street, Yau Ma Tei and 34 Mong Kok Road, Mong Kok. The EMSD has issued nuisance notices under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance to the owners of the cooling towers requiring appropriate disinfection work to be done. Disinfection of the cooling towers in these five cases has already been completed by the owners. Details of these five cases 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.