

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, August 4, 2023 is 104.5 (down 0.2 against yesterday's index).

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (August 4) released the latest grading of water quality for 39 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (see Note 2).

Twenty-one beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1) and 19 as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Shek O Beach*
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Silverstrand Beach*
Discovery Bay	South Bay Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach	St Stephen's Beach
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	Stanley Main Beach*
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	Tai Po Lung Mei Beach*
Kiu Tsui Beach	Tong Fuk Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	Trio Beach
Lo So Shing Beach	Turtle Cove Beach
Pui O Beach*	Upper Cheung Sha Beach
Repulse Bay Beach*	

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach*	Golden Beach*
Approach Beach	Hoi Mei Wan Beach
Big Wave Bay Beach*	Kadoorie Beach*
Butterfly Beach*	Lido Beach*
Cafeteria New Beach	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Cafeteria Old Beach	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*
Casam Beach*	Middle Bay Beach
Castle Peak Beach	Silver Mine Bay Beach*

Clear Water Bay Second Beach* Ting Kau Beach*
Deep Water Bay Beach*

Compared with the grading released last week, Clear Water Bay First Beach and Pui O Beach have been upgraded from Grade 2 to Grade 1.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, an EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a storm or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

Note 1: Lifeguard services are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at 22 gazetted beaches, marked with an asterisk (*) above, from May 1.

Note 2: This refers to the non-gazetted beach in Discovery Bay which has no lifeguard service.

Red flag hoisted at Hap Mun Bay Beach

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 (August 4) that due to big waves, the red flag has been hoisted at Hap Mun Bay Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at the beach.

[USEE attends Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Food Security Ministerial Meeting \(with photo\)](#)

The Under Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Miss Diane Wong, attended the eighth Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Food Security Ministerial Meeting today (August 4) via video conferencing to discuss and exchange views with leaders of other economies on achieving sustainable and resilient agri-food systems.

The meetings of APEC 2023 are held in a hybrid form in the United States this year. The main discussion topics of the Food Security Ministerial Meeting this year include how APEC economies take forward the implementation plan for the Food Security Roadmap Towards 2030 and the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 by promoting interconnectedness, innovation and inclusivity among the economies to combat threats of global food security, and how member economies achieve the objectives of food security through regional co-operation.

During the discussion among ministers, Miss Wong said, "The meeting offers us a valued opportunity to connect and to fortify our economic region in support of food security and sustainable agri-food systems."

Miss Wong remarked that Hong Kong, China supports advancing food safety through the use of digital technology, compressing the time for movement of perishable food imported from other places, enhancing food traceability, working hand in hand with stakeholders to formulate a blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries, and reducing food losses and food waste as part of the efforts to achieve carbon neutrality.

Miss Wong added, "Hong Kong, China fully supports the continued pursuance of measures to strengthen the development of an open, transparent, productive, sustainable and resilient food system, hand in hand with other APEC economies."



LD reminds employers and employees to take heat stroke preventive measures in times of Heat Stress at Work

Warning

As the Heat Stress at Work Warning is now in effect, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and employees to take appropriate measures during the effective period of the warning to prevent heat stroke when working in hot weather or hot environments.

Employees who work outdoors or in non-air-conditioned indoor environments face high levels of heat stress and are at a relatively higher risk of heat stroke. Employers should assess the risk factors of heat stress for employees at work and, based on the identified risk factors, take necessary preventive and control measures, including rescheduling work periods, setting up shading covers, providing ventilation and heat dissipation equipment, and reminding employees to replenish water and rest in a timely manner.

The Heat Stress at Work Warning is formulated by the LD based on the Hong Kong Heat Index. There are three levels of the warning: Amber, Red and Black, which help employers and employees better understand the level of heat stress while working outdoors or indoors without air-conditioning systems.

A spokesman for the LD said that when the department issues the Heat Stress at Work Warning, employers must refer to the criteria and recommendations provided in the "[Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work](#)" to conduct risk assessments, according to the workloads and other relevant heat stress risk factors, for employees who work outdoors or in non-air-conditioned indoor workplaces. Appropriate rest breaks should be arranged every hour, as far as reasonably practicable, based on various levels of the Heat Stress at Work Warning, to reduce employees' risk of heat stroke.

Employees must also follow instructions to rest on time. Whenever there are any symptoms of heat-related illnesses, such as headache, dizziness, thirst, and nausea, they should rest in a cool and shady place, drink water, and inform employers/supervisors to take appropriate action immediately.

The LD issued the "Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work", detailing the various risk factors that should be considered when conducting heat stress risk assessments and recommending corresponding control measures for identified risk factors for employers' and employees' reference. For the Heat Stress at Work Warning and related guidelines, please refer to the department's thematic webpage:

www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/prevention_of_heat_stroke_at_work.htm.