

Eight building plans approved in May

The Buildings Department approved eight building plans in May, with three on Hong Kong Island, three in Kowloon and two in the New Territories.

Of the approved plans, five were for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, two were for commercial developments, and one was for community services development.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on 13 building projects which, when completed, will provide 156 701 square metres of gross floor area for domestic use involving 4 521 units, and 49 257 sq m of gross floor area for non-domestic use. The department has received notification of commencement of superstructure works for 12 building projects.

The department also issued 15 occupation permits, with five on Hong Kong Island, four in Kowloon and six in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the gross floor area for domestic use was 8 905 sq m involving 282 units, and 27 083 sq m was for non-domestic use.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in May totalled about \$1 billion.

In addition, nine demolition consents involving nine building structures were issued.

The department received 2 528 reports about unauthorised building works (UBWs) in May and issued 914 removal orders on UBWs.

The full version of the Monthly Digest for May can be viewed on the Buildings Department's homepage (www.bd.gov.hk).

Polling date for the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election gazetted

A government spokesman said today (July 24) that the seventh District Council Ordinary Election would be held on December 10, 2023 (Sunday).

The Chief Executive has, in accordance with section 27 of the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547), specified the date for holding the seventh District Council Ordinary Election. The District Committees constituency

election and the District Council geographical constituency election will be held on the same day. The date was published in the Gazette today.

On the other hand, the nomination period for the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election (including the elections of the District Committees constituency and the District Council geographical constituency) will run from October 17 to October 30. The Chief Electoral Officer will publish a notice specifying the period within and address at which nomination forms are to be submitted, and announce the relevant details in due course.

The District Councils (Amendment) Ordinance 2023 was published in the Gazette and came into effect on July 10, enabling the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong" to also be fully implemented at the district governance level. The seventh-term District Councils will strictly adhere to the positioning under the Basic Law to carry out advisory and services functions, duly contribute to the Government's district governance work, and effectively respond to the expectations of the public.

The Government spokesman said, "The Government will endeavor to ensure that the seventh term District Councils will assume office on January 1, 2024 as scheduled, fully support the Electoral Affairs Commission to prepare and conduct the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election in accordance with the relevant amended electoral law, and ensure that the election will be open, fair, honest, and be safely and orderly conducted in an efficient and user-friendly manner. The Government also encourages individuals with talents and aspirations who are patriotic and have an affection for Hong Kong to serve the community by actively participating in the election, and appeals to voters for exercising their civil rights by casting their votes, so as to elect the new term of aspiring and capable District Councils members for providing advisory services to the Government and serving the local community."

The spokesman also said, "Apart from reforming the District Councils, the Government has further improved the district governance system. The Steering Committee and Task Force on District Governance, which are led by the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration respectively, have been established to strengthen the high-level leadership and co-ordination capability of district work and to co-ordinate with relevant policy bureau and departments to effectively take forward the implementation of policies and measures at district level, thereby resolving cross-district livelihood issues effectively. At present, the relevant committee and task force have set clear work objectives and relevant policy measures, and are actively following up their implementation in order to continuously enhance the efficacy of district governance, provide timely and caring services to the public, so as to enable the public to garner a greater sense of achievement and satisfaction."

Suspected red tide sighted at Silver Mine Bay Beach

Attention TV and 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 (July 24) that due to the sighting of a suspected red tide, the red flag has been hoisted at Silver Mine Bay Beach in Islands District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at the beach until further notice.

Property owner fined over \$90,000 for persistently not complying with removal order

A property owner was convicted and fined over \$90,000 at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts last week for persistently failing to comply with a removal order issued under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123).

The order involved erection of partition walls in a unit of a composite building at Chatham Court, for subdividing the unit into several individual rooms. As the alteration works obstructed the means of escape and contravened the Building (Planning) Regulations, a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted by the Buildings Department (BD) in 2018 and was fined about \$50,000 upon conviction by the court. As the owner persisted in not complying with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted again. The owner was convicted again and fined \$90,800 at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts on July 18.

A spokesman for the BD said today (July 24), "Illegal subdivision of flats may lead to serious consequences. Owners must comply with the removal orders without delay. The BD will continue to take enforcement action against owners who have failed to comply with the removal orders, including instigation of prosecution, so as to ensure building safety."

Failure to comply with a removal order without reasonable excuse is a serious offence under the BO. The maximum penalty upon conviction is one

year's imprisonment and a fine of \$200,000, and a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence continues.

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.