

Beach Water Quality Forecast System Launched

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (August 15) launched the Beach Water Quality Forecast System, with a view to producing daily water quality forecasts, with data updated every morning, for all gazetted beaches in Hong Kong that are open for swimming. From now on, members of the public can obtain the latest water quality forecast information of all beaches through the Beach Water Quality Forecast mobile application (available for download from: www.epd.gov.hk/BWQApp) or the dedicated beach water quality forecast page (www.epd.gov.hk/BWQForecast) on the EPD's beach thematic website.

An EPD spokesman said, "In line with the vision to develop Hong Kong into a smart city, the EPD and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology have jointly conducted a research and development project, using statistical multiple linear regression model, which takes into account the most relevant and the latest environmental and hydrometeorological parameters, including microbiological data, rainfall, onshore wind, tide level, salinity, solar radiation and water temperature, to forecast the daily E. coli level in the water of the beaches, and the forecast results are then converted into an easy-to-understand Beach Water Quality Forecast Index. Through the smart technology platform, we wish to transform the water quality forecast model into a practical tool for disseminating the latest water quality forecast results to the public."

The Beach Water Quality Forecast System aims to predict the short-term beach water quality fluctuations arising from changes in hydrometeorological conditions, and produce near real-time water quality forecast to supplement the existing Beach Water Quality Monitoring Programme which relies on water quality monitoring data, assisting the public in early planning of water recreation activities. To facilitate easy understanding of the forecast results, the index system is established making reference to the existing rating system for beach water quality, and is categorised into 1-Good, 2-Fair, 3-Poor and 4-Very Poor. When the forecast result of a beach is 4-Very Poor, bathers should consider avoiding swimming at the beach.

For more information on the Beach Water Quality Forecasting System, please visit the EPD's dedicated beach water quality forecast page at www.epd.gov.hk/BWQForecast.