

CHP appealed to public to take precautionary measures against carbon monoxide poisoning

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (January 21) appealed to members of the public to take precautionary measures against carbon monoxide poisoning as a notification of a suspected case of carbon monoxide poisoning after the use of gas water heater was received from the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH) yesterday (January 20).

The case involved a 27-year-old woman, who was found unconscious when she had a shower by using a gas water heater for about half an hour inside the bathroom at home on January 19. She was sent to Tuen Mun Hospital and was later transferred to PYNEH for treatment. She is now in stable condition. According to preliminary investigation findings, the gas water heater was purchased through internet from areas outside Hong Kong. The exhaust fan in the bathroom has been broken down for a few days prior to the incident and window and door of the bathroom were closed completely during shower that may cause the increase in carbon monoxide level inside the bathroom.

Investigation is on going.

The CHP said that carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless and tasteless gas which is a by-product from incomplete combustion of any fuel which contains carbon, such as wood, natural gas and gasoline.

Exposure to low concentration of carbon monoxide can lead to a range of symptoms such as dizziness, headache, tiredness and nausea; whereas exposure to high concentration of carbon monoxide can lead to impaired vision, disturbed coordination, unconsciousness, brain damage or even death.

The CHP reminded members of the public that gas water heater should be used in a well ventilated area. They should seek medical attention immediately if suspected of developing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

For safety instructions on purchasing and using domestic gas water heater, please pay attention to Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD)'s following advice:

- Ensure that the gas water heater has been approved by EMSD and bears a "GU" mark;
- All installation, replacement or repair work on gas appliances must be carried out by a registered gas installer employed by a registered gas contractor. Moreover, conduct a regular safety inspection once every 18 months;
- Stop use immediately if the heater shows any abnormality, and contact

the appliance dealer to check or repair;

- Turn off the gas main switch promptly under safe conditions if a gas leak is detected and notify the appliance dealer.
- For more details, please refer to EMSD's [website](#).