

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

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (December 7) announced that the department tested 101 water samples collected from cooling towers in 62 buildings in its routine inspections in November this year. Three 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 three samples were collected are located at Wing Ming Building, 122 Ting On Street, Kwun Tong; 23-25 Mei King Street, Kowloon City and 2 Yee On Street, Kwun Tong. The EMSD has issued nuisance notice under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance to the owners of the cooling towers requiring appropriate disinfection work to be done. Among them, the owners of two cooling towers have already completed the disinfection work. The EMSD has instructed again the owner of the cooling tower of the remaining case at 2 Yee On Street, Kwun Tong, to complete the disinfection work within a prescribed period. Details of the cases can be found in Annex 2.

Apart from carrying out routine surveillance inspections, the EMSD assists the Centre for Health Protection in collecting water samples for testing for epidemiological investigation of Legionnaires' disease. In November, one sample was detected to have a total legionella count at or above the upper threshold. The owner of the cooling tower has completed disinfection work. Details of the cases can also 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.