

# FEHD urges public to postpone grave-sweeping activities and maintain anti-epidemic awareness

In view of the latest epidemic development of COVID-19 in Hong Kong, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (October 22) appealed to members of the public to defer their grave-sweeping plans as far as possible to avoid the crowded peak period. Grave sweepers should maintain anti-epidemic awareness, comply with relevant regulations on prevention and control of the disease and keep the environment hygienic.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "In order to reduce the risk of virus transmission through social contact, members of the public are urged to seriously consider postponing their grave-sweeping plans so as to lessen crowd situations and reduce close contact. People visiting cemeteries and columbaria paying respect to ancestors should avoid group gatherings when grave sweeping, maintain an appropriate social distance with others at all times, and avoid meal gatherings with relatives and friends at worship sites."

The spokesman reminded members of the public that they should seek medical advice promptly and refrain from going grave sweeping if they have a fever or respiratory symptoms. They should maintain good personal hygiene when grave sweeping, wear surgical masks and always keep their hands clean. They are also reminded to keep flammable items (such as alcohol antiseptic sprays and alcohol-based hand sanitisers) away from ignition sources, incense and candles, and furnaces for the sake of safety.

The spokesman urged the public to work together to keep the environment clean to prevent mosquito breeding. Grave sweepers should clear stagnant water and rubbish before leaving. Containers such as lunch boxes, drink cans, plastic bags and buckets for burning incense should also be removed.

During the two weeks before and after the Chung Yeung Festival, the opening hours of public columbaria under the FEHD is extended to 7am to 7pm till November 8. Special cleaning services are provided including disinfection of handrails and lift buttons inside public cemeteries and columbaria, and the deployment of more staff to clear undergrowth and remove rubbish, empty bottles and containers left behind by grave sweepers, remove water in containers and incense burners, and level ground surfaces to prevent accumulation of water. Furthermore, additional litter bins and toilet facilities are also provided.

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The FEHD appealed to the public to consider making use of the Internet Memorial Service webpage ([www.memorial.gov.hk](http://www.memorial.gov.hk)) and its mobile application to pay tribute to their deceased beloved ones.