

Government follows up on positive results of sewage surveillance and appeals to residents to undergo virus testing

The Government announced on February 26 that in order to fight the coronavirus epidemic, the Environmental Protection Department and the Drainage Services Department in collaboration with the cross-disciplinary team of the University of Hong Kong had strengthened the sampling of sewage for virus testing in all districts, and had detected positive results in many areas, indicating that there may be hidden cases in the premises within these areas.

Rapid test

As regards positive sewage testing results in Kwun Tong, Sai Kung, Eastern, North, Kowloon City and Sha Tin Districts, the Home Affairs Department (including Kwun Tong, Sai Kung, Eastern, North, Kowloon City and Sha Tin District Offices) will distribute COVID-19 rapid test kits to residents and all cleansing workers and property management staff working in the following areas (see Annex) starting from February 27 for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identifying infected persons:

- Sewage Testing Area Kwun Tong Site SMPE-01A/B/C – Sau Wah House of Sau Mau Ping Estate, Kwun Tong
- Sewage Testing Area Kwun Tong Site SMPE-04A/B – Sau Yee House of Sau Mau Ping Estate, Kwun Tong
- Sewage Testing Area Sai Kung – Block 5, On Ning Garden, Tseung Kwan O
- Sewage Testing Area Eastern Site 5A-2 (Part) – Tsui Wan Estate, Chai Wan
- Sewage Testing Area Northern Site 4A (Part) – Cheong Shing Court, Fanling
- Sewage Testing Area Tsim Sha Tsui Site 1A-1 (Part) – Oi Man Estate, Ho Man Tin
- Sewage Testing Area Shatin Site 9A (part) – Lok Chuen House, Ho Chuen House and Yan Chuen House of Shui Chuen O Estate, Sha Tin

In addition, the Kwun Tong District Office of Home Affairs Department will distribute COVID-19 rapid test kits to all cleansing workers and property management staff working in the following areas (see Annex) starting from February 27 for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identifying infected persons. The Government appeals to residents and those working in this area who have been exposed to infection risks to undergo testing on a voluntary basis to achieve "early identification, early isolation and early treatment".

- Sewage Testing Area Kwun Tong Site 1 (Part) – Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate, Lok Wah South Estate and Lok Wah North Estate, Kwun Tong

Members of the public may refer to (www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzFAUzTtmKk) for enquiries relating to the use of the rapid test kits.

When using a rapid test kit, please pay attention to and follow the instructions from the manufacturer to perform the test and read the result properly. It is advisable to record the displayed result by taking a photo immediately after reading. Users should wash their hands before and after performing the tests, and avoid placing non-essential items within the specimen collection area. After completing the test, wrap and seal all components of the test kit carefully and dispose properly. If the household environment is contaminated during the specimen collecting process, disinfection should be conducted with 1 in 49 diluted bleach solution or 70 per cent alcohol.

If people living or working in the areas with positive sewage testing results are tested positive with the rapid test kits, they may also call 2280 4772, the Government's 24-hour hotline for "persons tested positive with rapid antigen tests in areas with positive sewage testing results" for assistance. Should these persons begin to develop symptoms before results are available, they may consult their family doctors for advice according to their needs. When severe symptoms (e.g. prolonged fever at 38 degrees Celsius or above, or signs such as shortness of breath, palpitations, chest pain) are developed, members of the public are urged to call the 999 hotline for arranging ambulance transfer to hospital as early as possible.