

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

The Government announced today (February 1) 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.

Compulsory testing

In response to the positive sewage testing results in Tai Po, the Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, requiring any person who had been present at the following specified premises (See Annex) during the specified period to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test –

- Area around Ying Pun Ha, San Wa On Lane and Ka King Lane in Tai Po Tau, Tai Po

The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. The Government will knock on doors at the specified premises to notify residents of the compulsory testing requirement. Mobile testing stations will be set up as far as possible to ensure testing are conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well. They are advised to closely monitor their health conditions. They should seek medical attention and undergo testing even if they have only mild symptoms.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the website of the Centre for Health Protection, the Department of Health, via www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/105294.html .

Rapid test

As regards positive sewage testing results in Shatin and Tuen Mun, the Home Affairs Department (including Shatin District Office) will distribute

COVID-19 rapid test kits to residents in the following areas (see Annex) starting from tomorrow (February 2) for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identifying infected persons –

- Sewage Testing Area Sha Tin Site 7A (Oceanaire , Ocean View, La Costa and Yan On Estate)

In addition, the Home Affairs Department (including Tuen Mun District Office) and Housing Department will distribute three sets of COVID-19 rapid test kits to all cleansing workers and property management staff working in the following areas (see Annex) through the Hong Kong Property Services Alliance and the Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies 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 these areas (see Annex) 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 Tuen Mun Site 3 (Area around Venice Garden, Blossom Garden and Greenery Villa)
- Sewage Testing Area Tuen Mun Site 5A (Area around Tai Hing Estate, Tai Hing Gardens and Terrace Concerto)

Residents may refer to (www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjLzD3-gab4) for enquiries relating to the use of the rapid test kits.

If positive test result is shown on the test kit, medical attention should be sought at the Accident and Emergency Departments promptly to receive appropriate diagnosis and treatment at the earliest possible time. Residents tested positive should stay home as far as possible to avoid spreading the virus in the community. The Government stresses that rapid test kit testing is not a substitute for the compulsory testing requirement. Individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, who have visited places with epidemic outbreaks or have had contact with persons tested positive, etc, should undergo testing promptly at testing centres.