

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

The Government announced today (February 2) 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 Sha Tin, 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 in Sewage Testing Area Sha Tin Site 5A (see Annex) during the specified period to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test –

- All persons in the residential buildings (Hilton Plaza, Wai Wah Centre, Shatin Centre and residential areas in New Town Plaza)
- Patrons of Royal Park Hotel, Sha Tin
- Cleansing workers and property management staff who work in other venues including Shatin Law Courts Building, New Town Tower, New Town Plaza, Sha Tin Public Library, Sha Tin Marriage Registry, Sha Tin Town Hall, Yuen Wo Road Sports Centre, Sha Tin Water boosting pumping station on Yuen Wo Road, Sha Tin Jockey Club Swimming Pool, Sha Tin Jockey Club Public Squash Courts, etc.

The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. 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 Tai Po and Kwai Chung, the Home Affairs Department (including Tai Po District Office) will distribute COVID-19 rapid test kits to residents in the following areas starting from tomorrow (February 3) for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identifying infected persons –

- Lai Wo House and On Wo House of Tai Wo Estate, Tai Po
- Yat Wo House, Hing Wo House and Ka Wo House of Po Nga Court, Tai Po

â€œIn addition, the Home Affairs Department (including Kwai Tsing 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 area (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 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 Kwai Chung Site 3A (Area around Cho Yiu Chuen, Lai King Estate, Lai Yiu Estate and Wonderland Villas)

â€œResidents 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.