Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (June 15) released the latest grading of water quality of 37 gazetted beaches and one non-gazetted beach (Discovery Bay) that are open for swimming.

Twenty-six beaches were rated as $Good\ (Grade\ 1)$, 10 as $Fair\ (Grade\ 2)$ and two as $Poor\ (Grade\ 3)$.

Grade 1 beaches are:

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Approach Beach Hoi Mei Wan Beach

Butterfly Beach
Casam Beach
Shek O Beach

Castle Peak Beach Silverstrand Beach

Clear Water Bay First Beach Ting Kau Beach

Grade 3 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach

Compared with the grading released last week, Discovery Bay has been upgraded from Grade 4 to Grade 1; Kadoorie Beach from Grade 2 to Grade 1. Shek O Beach has been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2; Anglers' Beach and Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach from Grade 2 to Grade 3.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a storm or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. Latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the department's websites on Beach Water Quality (www.beachwq.gov.hk or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.