

Housing Authority inspects drainage pipes of about 100,000 public housing flats

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic early this year, the Housing Department (HD) has already inspected drainage pipes of about 100,000 flats, involving 1,200 domestic blocks of about 230 public housing estates (including those under the Tenants Purchase Scheme). Most of the drainage pipes were found to be in satisfactory condition while the remaining ones have been repaired as required. Moreover, the HD will continue to carry out preliminary inspections of the drainage facilities of the remaining 300 public housing domestic blocks, which is expected to be completed by end March 2021.

A spokesman for the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) said on December 29: "The HA pays much importance to the conditions of the drainage pipes of its public rental housing estates. During the epidemic, we have proactively inspected those flats sharing the same drainage system with flats with confirmed cases. On top of the existing Responsive In-flat Maintenance Scheme and Total Maintenance Scheme, a special drainage pipes inspection plan was devised with additional resources so as to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19. Moreover, the HA has launched the Drainage Inspection Programme on October 28 this year as a preventive measure."

Under the Drainage Inspection Programme, the HD is formulating a sequence for the inspection of its approximately 800,000 public rental housing flats having regard to the findings from its preliminary inspection since the outbreak of COVID-19, conditions of drainage pipes, maintenance records, percentages of elderly households and age of housing estates or buildings. Priority is given to the common drain pipes in public housing estates with confirmed COVID-19 cases. During the proactive inspection of common drain pipes, the HD is undertaking necessary repairs as appropriate. The whole programme is expected to be completed within 18 months.

Meanwhile, the HA is carrying out inspections under the Drainage Inspection Program to Choi Wan (II) Estate. With co-operation of the tenants, it is anticipated that the HD would be able to gain access to all the flats of Fung Chak House before this Friday (January 1, 2021) and their drainage pipes will be inspected and repaired if and where necessary.

The spokesman said: "The HA has been in full cooperation with the Government on measures to curb the spread of the virus by deploying additional resources to enhance the daily cleaning and disinfection work at its public housing estates, including intensifying the frequency of cleaning and disinfection work at common areas of frequent visitor flows, such as the

entrance of domestic blocks, security panels of the security gates and lift control panels and buttons, lift cars, lift lobbies, corridors, staircases, hand rails and surfaces of letter boxes, etc. We have also increased the disinfection frequency of the drainage system with a view to reducing the risk of the virus spread. Moreover, we have reminded domestic and commercial tenants through various publicity channels, such as putting up notices and banners and social media, to maintain good practices for personal, household, shop and environmental hygiene in the estates and reducing social contacts."