

Observatory enhances Very Hot Weather Warning service (with photos)

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) and the Senior Citizen Home Safety Association (SCHSA) held a joint press conference today (May 26) to introduce the enhanced Very Hot Weather Warning service, and to remind the public to get prepared for the very hot weather in summer.

The HKO enhanced the Very Hot Weather Warning service today, launching a new Special Weather Tips in response to extreme heat conditions and updating the precautions of the warning. When the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force, and if the temperature generally reaches the extreme level (35.0 degrees or above), the HKO will issue a Special Weather Tips and deliver it through push notification of the "MyObservatory" mobile application to alert the public of the extremely hot weather and to take appropriate precautions.

In 2022, there were 15 days with a daily maximum temperature at the headquarters of the HKO equal to 35.0 degrees or above, the highest on record. As the climate continues to warm, the annual mean temperature in Hong Kong in 2023 is expected to be above normal, with a high chance of reaching the warmest top 10 on record. The Acting Assistant Director of the HKO, Mr Cheng Yuen-chung, reminded the public, "Under the influence of the outer subsiding air of Tropical Cyclone Mawar, there may be extremely hot weather over Southern China early to midweek next week. Members of the public should pay attention to the change in weather and take adequate protective measures against the heat."

The HKO has been working with universities and partners to study the impact of very hot weather on public health, and to work together to revise the precautions of the Very Hot Weather Warning to include groups that are more vulnerable to heat stroke, and to include protective measures against the heat for extremely hot conditions. The Department of Health reminds that elderly persons, pregnant women, infants and children, those with chronic illnesses, such as heart disease or high blood pressure, as well as the obese, are more vulnerable to heat stroke. Any symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke should be closely monitored. Beware of health conditions under extremely hot weather, ensure adequate rest, drink more water, and avoid overheating of the body. Seek medical advice promptly if feeling unwell. The Labour Department also reminds those who are at work in hot weather or high-temperature environments to refer to the "Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work" of the Labour Department and take necessary precautions against the heat.

The Acting Chief Executive Officer of the SCHSA, Mr Johnny Yuen, said, "The elderly belongs to the group more vulnerable to heat stroke. In very hot weather, the elderly may feel unwell more easily. Those living in more crowded homes without air conditioning belong to the high-risk group." Besides, the Chief Executive Officer of the SCHSA, Ms Maura Wong, urged the elderly and their relatives are urged to pay attention to the latest weather

information from the HKO, or check the weather of the day and related health information through the "Care-On-Call" service platform. With mutual support, the elderly can stay healthy and safe.

For more information on protection against the heat, please visit the following websites:

The HKO on precautions of the Very Hot Weather Warning:

www.hko.gov.hk/en/wservice/warning/coldhot.htm

The Department of Health "Beware of Heat Stroke":

www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/90064.html

The Labour Department "Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work":

www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/prevention_of_heat_stroke_at_work.htm

The Home Affairs Department on temporary heat shelters:

www.had.gov.hk/en/public_services/emergency_services/emergency.htm

