

Red tides sighted

Twelve red tides have been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (February 26).

On February 22, staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) spotted eight red tides at Repulse Bay, South Bay Beach, Deep Water Bay Beach, Middle Bay Beach, Chung Hom Kok Beach, Turtle Cove Beach, Hong Kong Island; Ting Kau Beach, Tsuen Wan; and Lower Cheung Sha Beach on Lantau Island. Staff of the Environmental Protection Department spotted two red tides at Rambler Channel and Kwun Yam Beach, Cheung Chau, on the same day. In addition, staff of the LCSD also spotted two red tides at Stanley Main Beach, Hong Kong Island and Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach on February 23 and February 26, respectively.

Apart from the red tide persisting at Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach, the other 11 red tides have dissipated. No fish deaths associated with the 12 red tides have been reported as at today.

A spokesman for the working group said, "All 12 red tides were formed by *Noctiluca scintillans*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters and is non-toxic."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at Lo Tik Wan, Sok Kwu Wan, Po Toi, Ma Wan and Cheung Sha Wan fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue to monitor red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.