

Red tides sighted

Eleven red tides were sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (August 6).

The first red tide was spotted by a member of the public on July 31 at the western waters of Hong Kong (including Ma Wan Fish Culture Zone). On August 1, staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) spotted five red tides at six beaches in Tsuen Wan district, namely Approach Beach, Lido Beach and Casam Beach, Anglers' Beach, Hoi Mei Wan Beach and Ting Kau Beach. On August 2, the seventh red tide was sighted by a mariculturist at Chi Ma Wan Peninsula to Peng Chau (including Cheung Sha Wan Fish Culture Zone). On the same day, staff members of the Environmental Protection Department, Marine Department and LCSD spotted three red tides at Victoria Harbour, Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach, Tsuen Wan, and the waters off Cyberport respectively. On August 3, staff of the LCSD spotted the 11th red tide at Silver Mine Bay Beach, Lantau Island.

The red tide at Silver Mine Bay Beach, Lantau Island has dissipated while the other 10 red tides still persist.

A spokesman for the working group said, "All 11 red tides were formed by *Polykrikos geminatum*, which is not common in Hong Kong waters and is non-toxic."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) received report of fish loss today at the Cheung Sha Wan Fish Culture Zone. Investigation by the AFCD shows that the fish death was caused by anoxia.

The AFCD has stepped up monitoring of the fish culture zones throughout Hong Kong and urged mariculturists at the Ma Wan, Cheung Sha Wan, Lo Tik Wan and Sok Kwu Wan fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary. Mariculturists have been reminded to properly dispose of dead fish.

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