

Slaughtering services at SSSH and TWSH temporarily suspended

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (February 25) that in view of the epidemic situation, Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse (SSSH) and Tsuen Wan Slaughterhouse (TWSH) have to temporarily close from midnight tonight until further notice. The Government has requested the licence holders of the two slaughterhouses to work out solutions and a timeline for reopening, and is liaising with the Mainland to arrange professional and skilled workers to come to Hong Kong to assist, with a view to resuming slaughtering services as soon as practicable.

The FEHD was informed by the licence holders of SSSH and TWSH yesterday (February 24) and today respectively that they had manpower shortage because of the epidemic situation, therefore had to suspend their slaughtering services from midnight tonight. This morning, the latest results of the weekly COVID-19 tests arranged by FEHD for practitioners (including slaughterhouse staff, buyers and staff of importers) of SSSH also indicated that out of the 866 samples, 183 were positive. The FEHD has immediately notified the Centre for Health Protection.

For early detection of infected persons, the FEHD has requested all practitioners of SSSH and TWSH to take a polymerase chain reaction-based nucleic acid test for COVID-19 this weekend using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs. When the two slaughterhouses reopens, practitioners will be required to take the same test regularly, and will only be allowed to enter the slaughterhouses if they have a negative result. Apart from helping the licence holders of slaughterhouses implement this requirement, the FEHD will also continue to distribute rapid antigen test kits to all practitioners and request them to use it every day, so as to further safeguard their health.

Thorough cleansing and disinfection will be conducted at SSSH and TWSH this weekend. The FEHD will at the same time arrange cleansing and disinfection of the public areas in the vicinity of the slaughterhouses.

In addition, the Government has appealed to food suppliers to increase the supply of chilled and frozen meat products to meet community demand.