

## MD announcement (2)

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The Marine Department today (February 2) reminded masters, coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels navigating in Hong Kong waters to proceed at a safe speed and exercise extreme caution because restricted visibility of less than 2 nautical miles has been reported.

Appropriate sound signals shall be made when underway or at anchor. All vessels must comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collision at Sea.

Also, when radar is used without the benefit of adequate plotting facilities, the information obtained from the equipment is rather limited and should be construed accordingly.

Visibility reports are broadcast by the Vessel Traffic Centre (VTC) on VHF channels 02, 12, 14, 63 and 67.

In the event of an accident, a report shall be made immediately to the VTC at Tel: 2233 7801.

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## CFS follows up on aquatic and seaweed products imported from Japan suspected of breaching Food Safety Order

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (February 2) that aquatic and seaweed products manufactured and processed in regulated Japanese metropolis/prefectures were suspected to be in breach of the relevant Food Safety Order when the CFS inspected food imported from Japan. The products concerned have been marked and sealed by the CFS and have not entered the market. The CFS is following up on the cases.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "During inspections of the food labels of the concerned consignments of food imported from Japan, the CFS found two boxes of frozen crab legs suspected to have been processed in Ibaraki Prefecture, five packs of frozen fish roe product and three packs of chilled scallops suspected to have been manufactured and processed in Miyagi

Prefecture respectively, as well as two packs of dried seaweed products suspected to have been manufactured and processed in Tokyo respectively, after the Order was issued. The importers concerned are thus suspected of breaching the relevant Order."

According to the Order, all aquatic products originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, are prohibited from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong if they are harvested, manufactured, processed or packed on or after August 24, 2023, including all live, chilled, frozen, dried or otherwise preserved aquatic products, sea salt, and unprocessed or processed seaweed.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incidents and take appropriate action, including informing the Japanese authorities concerned of the incidents. Prosecution will be instituted against the importers concerned should there be sufficient evidence. The investigation is ongoing.

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## **DH's Yau Ma Tei Integrated Treatment Centre commences one-stop sexual health service for target population**

The Department of Health (DH) today (February 2) announced that a one-stop sexual health service for sexual minorities, namely The Commons, will be launched next Monday (February 5) at Yau Ma Tei Integrated Treatment Centre (YMTITC) under the DH's Special Preventive Programme. With the introduction of The Commons, a total of three programmes covering a comprehensive range of services for HIV prevention are under YMTITC, which is located on 7/F, Yau Ma Tei Jockey Club Polyclinic, with the other two being AIDS Counselling and Testing Service as well as Therapeutic Prevention Clinic.

In addition to the provision of screening for HIV and viral hepatitis, sexual health assessment, testing and treatment of specific sexually transmitted infections, The Commons will also proactively identify people in need of counselling, including those who are affected by the practice of high-risk behaviours. Meanwhile, The Commons is committed to maintaining and fostering close collaborations and mutual support with non-governmental organisations, leveraging the efficiency at the primary healthcare level to maximise its impact on disease prevention.

Taking reference from the recommendation by the World Health Organization and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the DH has set up The Commons under a person-centred care concept with an aim to catering for the diverse needs of service recipients and delivering a one-

stop integrated service. As its name implies, The Commons carries the mission to converge the power of caring and inclusivity from stakeholders, paving and walking the path together with service recipients. The Commons serves to address the overall wellbeing of individuals seeking its services. It is expected that this integrated programme can be tailored to provide appropriate and accessible prevention services to meet the needs of people with high infection risks.

People who are in need of the services provided by The Commons should approach designated organisations for initial assessment prior to referral. For details of The Commons and designated referral organisations, please visit [www.aids.gov.hk/english/itc/consultation.html](http://www.aids.gov.hk/english/itc/consultation.html).

Since the first case of HIV/AIDS was reported in Hong Kong in 1984, the DH has all along been serving its role in conducting surveillance and analysis of the local epidemiology of HIV/AIDS, supporting the development of evidence-based AIDS strategies, as well as offering tailored prevention and care services in both clinical and public health perspectives.

A spokesman for the DH reminded that sexual transmission is the major route of HIV transmission locally. People who have unprotected sex should take an HIV antibody test early and key populations with a higher risk of infection should undergo regular screening of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. The public may visit the Virtual AIDS Office ([www.aids.gov.hk](http://www.aids.gov.hk)) for more information on HIV/AIDS.

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## **[FEHD strives to ensure food safety of oysters to be eaten in raw state \(with photos\)](#)**

To safeguard food safety and protect public health, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) and the Environmental Hygiene Branch of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) have enhanced inspections before the Lunar New Year holidays of various licensed food premises across the territory to ensure that oysters to be eaten in a raw state (raw oysters) be stored at the proper temperature.

A spokesman for the FEHD said today (February 2), "The FEHD has launched a series of operations since Wednesday (January 31) and stepped up inspections in various districts. No irregularities have been detected so far. Health advice was also given, and food safety pamphlets were distributed to operators and staff of food premises regarding the proper way of storing and handling raw oysters."

As stipulated under the permit/licensing conditions of the restricted

food permit or written permission issued by the FEHD, all raw oysters ready for immediate consumption shall be kept in a refrigerator or compartment of a refrigerator separated from other food items at a temperature between 0 and 4 degrees Celsius. If a breach of the aforesaid condition is found, FEHD officers will, depending on the actual circumstances, issue verbal warnings or warning letters, and may even consider cancellation of the permits/licences of relevant premises.

The spokesman reminded that as oysters feed by filtering a large volume of seawater and absorbing suspended food particles therein, bacteria (e.g. *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* and *Vibrio vulnificus*) and viruses (e.g. norovirus and Hepatitis A virus) may accumulate in them if they are grown in or harvested from contaminated water. Consuming oysters without thorough cooking might risk direct intake of these microorganisms. Susceptible groups, such as pregnant women, young children, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems or liver diseases, should avoid eating them.

In addition, the CFS held a Food Safety Seminar for Trade in December 2023 and reminded food businesses to follow Good Hygiene Practices when handling and serving oysters. If raw oysters are served, food handlers are urged to take heed of the following:

- Keep the raw oysters cool at 4 degrees C or below all the way before eating to inhibit bacterial growth;
- Prevent cross-contamination of foods during storage by keeping raw oysters in a closed container in a designated refrigerator;
- Practise good hygiene at all times, including washing hands and using clean and separate utensils for handling oysters; and
- Use clean protective gloves when handling or shucking oysters to prevent injury and infection.

"However, these measures are not all fail-safe," the CFS spokesman added. "Thorough cooking is the most effective way to reduce the risk of foodborne illness."

The CFS has issued new food safety advice that provides the public with information on the food safety risks of raw oysters as well as a set of trade guidelines to assist the food businesses in implementing appropriate food safety measures when serving oysters to be eaten raw. For the sake of food safety, the public, especially susceptible populations, should cook oysters thoroughly before eating. Details of the advice and guidelines are available on the CFS's website ([www.cfs.gov.hk/oyster](http://www.cfs.gov.hk/oyster)).

The FEHD will continue to step up inspections to ensure that the licensing/permit conditions are observed by the licensees/permit holders or relevant operators, and the hygienic standards stipulated in the laws are met.



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## [13 landlords of subdivided units under regulated tenancies convicted of failing to submit Notice of Tenancy within prescribed period](#)

Thirteen landlords of subdivided units (SDUs) who contravened Part IVA of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance (Cap. 7) (the Ordinance) pleaded guilty for failing to submit a Notice of Tenancy (Form AR2) to the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation within 60 days after the term of the regulated tenancy commenced and were fined a total of \$13,600 today (February 2) at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts. One of the landlords who contravened three offences was fined \$2,400. Since the Ordinance has come into force, a total of 117 SDU landlords have been convicted of contravening the Ordinance.

The Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) earlier discovered that the landlords failed to comply with the relevant requirements under the Ordinance. Upon in-depth investigations and evidence collection, the RVD prosecuted against the landlords.

A spokesman for the RVD hopes that these convictions will send a strong message to SDU landlords that they must comply with the relevant requirements under the Ordinance, and also reminds SDU tenants of their rights under the Ordinance. He also stresses that the RVD will continue to take resolute enforcement action against any contraventions of the Ordinance. Apart from following up on reported cases, the RVD has been adopting a multipronged approach to proactively identify, investigate and follow up on cases concerning landlords who are suspected of contravening the Ordinance. In particular, the RVD has been requiring landlords of regulated tenancies to provide information and reference documents of their tenancies for checking

whether the landlords concerned have complied with the requirements of the Ordinance. If a landlord, without reasonable excuse, refuses to provide the relevant information or neglects the RVD's request, the landlord commits an offence and is liable to a fine at level 3 (\$10,000) and to imprisonment for three months. Depending on the actual circumstances and having regard to the information and evidence collected, the RVD will take appropriate actions on individual cases, including instigating prosecutions against suspected contravention of the Ordinance.

The RVD spokesman appeals to members of the public to come forward and report to the RVD promptly any suspected cases of contravening the relevant requirements. This would help curb illegal acts as soon as possible. Reporting can be made through the telephone hotline (2150 8303), by email ([enquiries@rvd.gov.hk](mailto:enquiries@rvd.gov.hk)), by fax (2116 4920), by post (15/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon), or in person (visiting the Tenancy Services Section office of the RVD at Room 3816-22, 38/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong, and please call 2150 8303 to make an appointment in advance). Furthermore, the RVD has provided a form (Form AR4) ([www.rvd.gov.hk/doc/en/forms/ar4.pdf](http://www.rvd.gov.hk/doc/en/forms/ar4.pdf)) on its website to facilitate SDU tenants' reporting to the RVD.

The RVD reminds that pursuant to the Ordinance, a regulated cycle of regulated tenancies is to comprise two consecutive regulated tenancies (i.e. the first-term tenancy and second-term tenancy) for an SDU, and the term of each regulated tenancy is two years. A tenant of a first-term tenancy for an SDU is entitled to be granted a second-term tenancy of the regulated cycle, thus enjoying a total of four years of security of tenure. Since the first batch of regulated tenancies already approached their second-term tenancies, the RVD has started a new round of publicity and education work in order to assist SDU landlords and tenants to understand the important matters pertaining to the second-term tenancy, and procedures that need to be followed about two months prior to the commencement of the purported second-term tenancy. In addition, the RVD has started issuing letters enclosing relevant information to the landlords and tenants concerned of regulated tenancies by batches, according to the expiry time of their first-term tenancies, to remind them about their respective obligations and rights under the Ordinance. These landlords and tenants may also visit the dedicated page for the second-term tenancy on the RVD's website ([www.rvd.gov.hk/en/tenancy\\_matters/second\\_term\\_tenancy.html](http://www.rvd.gov.hk/en/tenancy_matters/second_term_tenancy.html)) for the relevant information, including a concise guide, brochures, tutorial videos and frequently asked questions, etc. SDU landlords and tenants are also advised to familiarise themselves with the relevant statutory requirements and maintain close communication regarding the second-term tenancy for handling the matters properly and in a timely manner according to the Ordinance.

For enquiries related to regulated tenancies, please call the telephone hotline (2150 8303) or visit the RVD's webpage ([www.rvd.gov.hk/en/our\\_services/part\\_iva.html](http://www.rvd.gov.hk/en/our_services/part_iva.html)) for the relevant information.