

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (December 8) released the latest grading of water quality for four gazetted beaches that are open all year round for swimming.

Three beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1) and one as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Clear Water Bay Second Beach Golden Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach

Grade 2 beach is:

Silverstrand Beach

Compared with the grading released last week, Silverstrand Beach has been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the Beach Water Quality Forecast mobile application (available for download from: www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQApp) or the dedicated beach water quality forecast page (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast) on the EPD's beach thematic website.

Research Grants Council to present public lecture on Happy, Healthy, Longevity – AI Can Help on December 16

The following is issued on behalf of the University Grants Committee:

In line with the Government's initiative to promote STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) education for all, for fun and for diversity, the Research Grants Council (RGC) will organise a series of public lectures titled Happy, Healthy, Longevity – AI Can Help from December 2023 to January 2024, covering areas including technology, innovation and health. The first lecture will be held at the Hong Kong Science Museum on December 16 (Saturday). All are welcome.

The RGC has invited Associate Professor and Assistant Head of the Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering of the University of Hong Kong, Dr Calvin Or, and Professor and Head of the Division of Upper Gastrointestinal and Metabolic Surgery of the Department of Surgery of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Professor Chiu Wai-yan, to introduce wearable robots that can enhance the mobility of the elderly, and the latest development of artificial intelligence (AI) and robotic surgery respectively. Details are as follows:

Time: 2.30pm – 4.30pm

Venue: Lecture Hall, 1/F, Hong Kong Science Museum

Language: Cantonese

Admission: Free (seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis)

Members of the public can also watch a live broadcast of the lecture through the Facebook page (www.facebook.com/hkscm) or the YouTube Channel (www.youtube.com/user/hksciencemuseum) of the Hong Kong Science Museum.

First session: User-centered design of wearable robots for older adults

Increases in life expectancy have been accompanied by increases in the prevalence of low mobility among older adults, which can significantly reduce the quality of life. Among older adults, reduction in mobility mainly occurs due to the physical challenges caused by loss of muscle mass. Wearable robots can provide active assistance to limbs to enhance mobility of the elderly. Despite proven feasibility, many wearable robots have remained in the concept stage. Dr Or will introduce a project focusing on a user-centered approach to the design and development of wearable robots for older adults.

Second session: The next phase of surgery – kindest cut through AI and robotics

The development of minimally invasive surgery (MIS) has revolutionised the approach to surgical treatment for diseases and the introduction of a robotic surgical system-refined precision in MIS. Recently, AI has been widely applied to enhance the diagnostic capability of endoscopy for gastrointestinal cancers. Professor Chiu will share his team's experiences in performing the world's first flexible robotic endoscopic submucosal dissection for treatment of early gastric and colonic neoplasia and explain how AI can assist surgeons in achieving more precise and safe surgeries at all scales down to the microscopic level through nano-robotics in the next phase.

The RGC has been regularly organising public lectures since 2009, featuring various distinguished scholars as speakers. These lectures aim to promote research knowledge of Hong Kong's tertiary institutions and to raise public awareness of the significance and value of local research work.

For enquiries, please call 2524 3987 or visit the University Grants Committee webpage (www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/about/events/lectures/lectures.html). In addition, members of the public can register for the RGC's email subscription service at www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/about/subscribe to receive regular updates.

Approved URA Kwun Tong Town Centre – Main Site Development Scheme Plan amended

The Town Planning Board today (December 8) announced amendments to the approved Urban Renewal Authority (URA) Kwun Tong Town Centre (KTTC) – Main Site Development Scheme Plan (DSP).

The amendments mainly involve (i) rezoning a site to the north of Kwun Tong Road from "Comprehensive Development Area (1)" ("CDA(1)") to "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Mixed Use" for mixed use development, and (ii) rezoning a site to the south of Mut Wah Street from "CDA(1)" to "Residential (Group A)" to reflect the completed development.

Opportunity is also taken to amend the Notes and Explanatory Statement of the DSP in accordance with the latest Master Schedule of Notes to Statutory Plans and also to reflect the above amendments and the latest status and planning circumstances of the development scheme area.

The draft URA KTTC – Main Site DSP No. S/K14S/URA1/3, incorporating the amendments, is available for public inspection during office hours at (i) the

Secretariat of the Town Planning Board, (ii) the Planning Enquiry Counters, (iii) the Kowloon District Planning Office and (iv) the Kwun Tong District Office.

Any person may make written representations in respect of the amendments to the Secretary of the Town Planning Board on or before February 8, 2024. Any person who intends to make a representation is advised to read the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 29C on "Submission and Processing of Representations and Further Representations" (TPB PG-No. 29C).

Submission of a representation should comply with the requirements set out in TPB PG-No. 29C. In particular, the representer should take note of the following:

- * If the representer fails to provide his or her full name and the first four alphanumeric characters of his or her Hong Kong identity card or passport number as required under TPB PG-No. 29C, the representation submitted shall be treated as not having been made; and
- * The Secretariat of the Town Planning Board reserves the right to require the representer to provide identity proof for verification.

The Guidelines and the submission form are available at the above locations (i) and (ii) and the Town Planning Board's website (www.tpb.gov.hk).

Copies of the draft URA KTTC – Main Site DSP are available for sale at the Map Publications Centres in North Point and Yau Ma Tei. The electronic version of the DSP can be viewed on the Town Planning Board's website (www.tpb.gov.hk).

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, December 8, 2023 is 104.6 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Police's National Security Department arrests one man

The National Security Department of the Hong Kong Police Force conducted an enforcement operation this morning (December 8) and arrested a 77-year-old

man in Cheung Sha Wan, for being suspected of "attempting to do or making any preparation to do an act or acts with seditious intention", contravening Section 9 and 10 of the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200).

The arrested man is being detained for further enquiries and the investigation is underway.

Police remind members of the public that "attempting to do or making any preparation to do an act or acts with seditious intention" is a serious crime. Offenders shall be liable upon conviction to imprisonment for two years on first conviction and imprisonment for three years on subsequent conviction. Members of the public are urged not to defy the law.