

# Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 4) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, adding that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From November 26 to December 2, two community-acquired LD cases and one imported LD case were reported:

1. A male patient, aged 89 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Tai On Building, Sai Wan Ho;
2. A female patient, aged 70 with underlying illnesses, who had been to Mainland China during the incubation period and was classified as an imported case; and
3. A female patient, aged 71 with good past health, who lives in Sai Kung Main Street, Sai Kung.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of December 2, 116 LD cases had been reported this year. In 2022 and 2021, there were 80 and 69 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems leading to stagnant water; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus that support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A

shower may also generate small aerosols; and

- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh-water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
  1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
  2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
  3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
  4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
  5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

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# [Fraudulent instant messages related to Bank of China \(Hong Kong\) Limited](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited relating to fraudulent instant messages, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or One-Time Password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the instant messages concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

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# [Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the third quarter of 2023](#)

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (December 4) released the statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the third quarter of 2023.

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In the third quarter of 2023, total port cargo throughput decreased by 8.2% to 45.3 million tonnes over a year earlier. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 5.9% and 11.9% to 28.9 million tonnes and 16.4 million tonnes respectively.

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For the first nine months of 2023, total port cargo throughput decreased by 9.0% to 131.0 million tonnes over a year earlier. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 8.3% and 10.2% to 83.4 million tonnes and 47.6 million tonnes respectively.

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## Containers

In the third quarter of 2023, the port of Hong Kong handled 3.67 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 12.8% over a year earlier. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 13.8% and 9.1% to 2.90 million TEUs and 0.77 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 14.9% and 12.5% to 1.55 million TEUs and 1.35 million TEUs respectively.

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For the first nine months of 2023, the port of Hong Kong handled 10.79 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 14.6% over a year earlier. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 15.9% and 9.6% to 8.52 million TEUs and 2.27 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 17.3% and 14.2% to 4.57 million TEUs and 3.95 million TEUs respectively.

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On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, laden container throughput decreased by 0.6% in the third quarter of 2023. Within this total, inward laden containers increased by 0.2%, while outward laden containers decreased by 1.5%.

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In the third quarter of 2023, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 11.6% and 18.6% to 2.06 million TEUs and 0.84 million TEUs respectively over a year earlier.

In the first nine months of 2023, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 15.7% and 16.3% to 6.08 million TEUs and 2.45 million TEUs respectively over a year earlier.

## Vessel arrivals

Comparing the third quarter of 2023 with a year earlier, the number of ocean vessel arrivals increased by 8.1% to 4 714, with the total capacity also increasing by 23.0% to 76.4 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals increased by 44.2% to 19 686, with the total capacity also increasing by 9.2% to 19.0 million net tons.

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Comparing the first nine months of 2023 with a year earlier, the number of ocean vessel arrivals increased by 15.7% to 14 025, with the total capacity also increasing by 27.4% to 224.3 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals increased by 42.6% to 52 846, with the total capacity also increasing by 14.5% to 54.7 million net tons.

## Further information

Port cargo and laden container statistics are compiled from a sample of consignments listed in the cargo manifests supplied by shipping companies and agents to the C&SD. Vessel statistics are compiled by the Marine Department primarily from general declarations submitted by ship masters and authorised shipping agents. Pleasure vessels and fishing vessels plying exclusively within the river trade limits are excluded.

Table 1 presents the detailed port cargo statistics.

Table 2 and Table 3 respectively present the inward and outward port cargo statistics by main countries/territories of loading and discharge.

Table 4 and Table 5 respectively present the inward and outward port cargo statistics by principal commodities.

Table 6 presents the detailed container statistics.

Table 7 presents the statistics on vessel arrivals in Hong Kong.

More detailed statistics on port cargo, containers and vessels are published in the report "Hong Kong Shipping Statistics, Third Quarter 2023". Users can browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1020008&scode=230](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1020008&scode=230)).

For enquiries about port cargo and container statistics, please contact the Electronic Trading Services and Cargo Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 2126 or email: [shipping@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:shipping@censtatd.gov.hk)). For enquiries about vessel statistics, readers may contact the Statistics Section under the Planning, Development and Port Security Branch of the Marine Department (Tel: 2852 3662 or email: [st-sec@mardep.gov.hk](mailto:st-sec@mardep.gov.hk)).

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## **Phishing instant messages and fraudulent social media accounts related to Hang Seng Bank, Limited**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Hang Seng Bank, Limited relating to phishing instant messages and fraudulent social media accounts, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has

conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the instant messages or social media accounts concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

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## **Testing and Certification Manpower Development Award Scheme 2023-24 announces award results (with photos)**

Organised by the Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification (HKCTC) with full support from the Innovation and Technology Commission, the Testing and Certification Manpower Development Award Scheme 2023-24 award presentation ceremony was held today (December 4) to announce the award results. Each awardee of testing and certification (T&C) bodies and practitioners was presented with a trophy and an award certificate at the event, which was attended by over 200 guests and awardees.

HKCTC launched the relevant Award Scheme for the first time in 2021, with a view to encouraging T&C bodies to invest in talent training and development, while commending those T&C practitioners who strive for continuous learning and contribute to service quality improvement. The feedback from the T&C industry towards the biannual Award Scheme has been favourable. In congratulating the awardees of T&C bodies and practitioners at the award presentation ceremony, the HKCTC Chairman, Professor Wong Wing-tak, said, "We hope that good examples would be set for different sectors of the community to appreciate the great importance attached by the T&C industry to talent and also for the young generation to better understand the professional's mission as well as contributions to society. By attracting talent to join the pool, Hong Kong's T&C industry would be in a position to open a new chapter of sustainable development in this latest era of technological innovations."

Officiating at the award presentation ceremony, the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, gave a few words of encouragement to the T&C industry. He said, "The awards you received today are in recognition of your outstanding performance. As for the time ahead, I look forward to each of you being able to learn from one another in continuing to strive for excellence while partnering up, so that we together contribute our parts to the technological innovations and high-quality economic development of Hong Kong and our country."

The Award Scheme includes two categories of awards – the Testing and Certification Manpower Development Corporate Award and the Excellent Testing

and Certification Professional Award. There are two tiers of awards, i.e. the Platinum Award and the Gold Award under the Corporate Award category. As regards the Professional Award category, it encompasses two sub-groups of the Junior Professional and Senior Professional respectively.

The Award Scheme has received tremendous support from the T&C industry as well as different stakeholders. The 15 supporting organisations include Association of Construction Materials Laboratories; BEAM Society; Chinese University of Hong Kong (Department of Chemistry); Consumer Council; Gemmological Association of Hong Kong; Hong Kong Association for Testing, Inspection and Certification; Hong Kong Association of Medical Laboratories; Hong Kong Institution of Certified Auditors; Hong Kong Institution of Engineers – Materials Division; Hong Kong Metropolitan University (School of Science and Technology); Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Department of Applied Biology and Chemical Technology); Hong Kong Society for Quality; Hong Kong Trade Development Council; Qualifications Framework; and Vocational Training Council. Applications received for the two categories of awards were respectively assessed (including conducting interview with applicants for the Professional Award) by two independent Assessment Panels, which comprise members from the academia, public body and industrial association, to decide on the awardees. The lists of awardees are available on the dedicated webpage of the Award Scheme ([tcmpaward.hk](http://tcmpaward.hk)).





