

## DH conducts joint operation with Police against waterpipe smoking in no smoking areas (with photos)

The Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office (TACO) of the Department of Health (DH) yesterday (June 28) evening conducted a large-scale joint operation with the Police against illegal waterpipe smoking activities in no smoking areas in Tsim Sha Tsui, Central and Wan Chai district.

During the operation, law enforcement officers (including plainclothes officers) inspected 34 bars and issued a total of 43 fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to persons illegally smoking waterpipes at seven bars. The TACO's investigation is ongoing and prosecution may also be taken against operators of the bars/restaurants who are suspected of contravening the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance (Cap. 371) (the Ordinance) and the Criminal Procedure Ordinance (Cap. 221) for aiding and abetting smoking offences.

Under the Ordinance, conducting a smoking act in a statutory no smoking area (such as indoor areas of bars or restaurants) is prohibited. Any person doing a smoking act in statutory no smoking areas are liable to a fixed penalty of \$1,500. Moreover, where tobacco products (including waterpipes) are sold, in bars or otherwise, restrictions on the sale and promotion of tobacco products stipulated in the Ordinance apply. Venue managers of statutory no smoking areas are empowered by the Ordinance to request the smoking offender to cease the act; if the offender is not co-operative, he/she may contact the Police for assistance.

Also, under the Criminal Procedure Ordinance, any person who aids, abets, counsels or procures the commission by another person of any offence shall be guilty of the like offence. A spokesman for the DH appeals to operators and venue managers of bars/restaurants not to assist any person in breaching the statutory smoking prohibition, or provide a waterpipe apparatus and tobacco to customers for use.

A DH spokesman stressed that the TACO will follow up and investigate every complaint about illegal smoking, and will conduct inspections and take enforcement actions in the venue concerned. The TACO will also conduct joint inspections and enforcement actions (including plainclothes operations) with other law enforcement agencies from time to time with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement. The DH will continue to closely monitor and to take stringent enforcement actions to tackle illegal waterpipe smoking. In the past 12 months, the TACO conducted 25 decoy operations against illegal waterpipe smoking activities in no smoking areas. A total of 77 FPNs were issued against smoking offenders and while 74 summonses were issued to staff members and operators of the bars/restaurants for other related offences.

The spokesman said that waterpipe is a smoking product and its

combustion of fuel (e.g. charcoal) releases high concentrations of carbon monoxide. Due to deeper inhalation and longer smoking session, waterpipe users usually inhale more toxins than they would when smoking cigarettes. A typical one-hour waterpipe smoking session exposes the user to 100 to 200 times the volume of smoke inhaled from a single conventional cigarette. Besides, sharing the waterpipe apparatus increases the risk of infectious disease transmission such as tuberculosis. For more information on the hazards of waterpipe smoking, please visit [www.livetobaccofree.hk/pdfs/waterpipe\\_leaflet\\_new.pdf](http://www.livetobaccofree.hk/pdfs/waterpipe_leaflet_new.pdf). The spokesman cautions against waterpipe smoking or the use of other smoking products. Smokers should quit smoking as early as possible for their own health and that of others.



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## [LD reminds employers and employees to take heat stroke preventive measures in times of Heat Stress at Work Warning](#)

As the Heat Stress at Work Warning is now in effect, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and employees to take appropriate measures during the effective period of the warning to prevent heat stroke when working in hot weather or hot environments.

Employees who work outdoors or in non-air-conditioned indoor environments face high levels of heat stress and are at a relatively higher risk of heat stroke. Employers should assess the risk factors of heat stress for employees at work and, based on the identified risk factors, take necessary preventive and control measures, including rescheduling work periods, setting up shading covers, providing ventilation and heat dissipation equipment, and reminding employees to replenish water and rest in a timely manner.

The Heat Stress at Work Warning is formulated by the LD based on the Hong Kong Heat Index. There are three levels of the warning: Amber, Red and Black, which help employers and employees better understand the level of heat stress while working outdoors or indoors without air-conditioning systems.

A spokesman for the LD said that when the department issues the Heat Stress at Work Warning, employers must refer to the criteria and recommendations provided in the "[Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work](#)" to conduct risk assessments, according to the workloads and other relevant heat stress risk factors, for employees who work outdoors or in non-air-conditioned indoor workplaces. Appropriate rest breaks should be arranged every hour, as far as reasonably practicable, based on various levels of the Heat Stress at Work Warning, to reduce employees' risk of heat stroke.

Employees must also follow instructions to rest on time. Whenever there are any symptoms of heat-related illnesses, such as headache, dizziness, thirst, and nausea, they should rest in a cool and shady place, drink water, and inform employers/supervisors to take appropriate action immediately.

The LD issued the "Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work", detailing the various risk factors that should be considered when conducting heat stress risk assessments and recommending corresponding control measures for identified risk factors for employers' and employees' reference. For the Heat Stress at Work Warning and related guidelines, please refer to the department's thematic webpage:

[www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/prevention\\_of\\_heat\\_stroke\\_at\\_work.htm](http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/prevention_of_heat_stroke_at_work.htm).

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## [Red flag hoisted at Hung Shing Yeh Beach](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (June 29) that due to big waves, the red flag has been hoisted at Hung Shing Yeh Beach in Islands District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at the beach.

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## Flag-raising ceremony cancelled

Owing to the thunderstorm warning, the flag-raising ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai at 8am today (June 29) will be cancelled.

If the thunderstorm warning is cancelled and weather conditions permit by then, the flag-raising ceremony may be resumed without further notice.

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## Territory-wide flag day today

Children Chiropractic Foundation Limited has been issued a Public Subscription Permit to hold a territory-wide flag sale from 7am to 12.30pm today (June 29), a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities, including any updated information, covered by the issued Public Subscription Permits have been published on the GovHK website ([www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search](http://www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search)). Permits for flag days containing information on contact methods of the flag-selling organisations and the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website ([www.swd.gov.hk/en/ngo/controlofc/flagdays](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/ngo/controlofc/flagdays)) for reference. For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the designated hotline of the 1823 Call Centre at 3142 2678.

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.