

CHP investigates three food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (June 21) investigating three epidemiologically linked food poisoning clusters affecting nine persons involving a restaurant located in The Kimberley Hotel. The CHP reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent foodborne diseases.

The first cluster involved three females aged between 54 and 82, who developed abdominal pain, fever, nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea and weakness about 28 hours after having a lunch buffet at the Coffee House in the Kimberley Hotel located in Tsim Sha Tsui on June 17.

The second cluster involved four females aged between 7 and 50, who developed similar symptoms about 14 hours after having a dinner buffet at the same restaurant of the hotel on June 18.

The third cluster involved a male and a female, who developed similar symptoms about 12 hours after having a dinner buffet at the same restaurant of the hotel on June 18.

Among the nine affected persons, seven of them sought medical advice. Three of them required hospitalisation. The stool specimen of one affected person was positive for Salmonella upon laboratory testing. All patients are in stable condition.

Initial investigations by the CHP revealed that the clusters involved buffets, and the affected persons had consumed different types of food including cold seafood platters and desserts. The CHP appeals to persons who have patronised the Coffee House in the Kimberley Hotel on June 17 or 18, and have experienced relevant acute gastroenteritis symptoms such as abdominal pain, fever, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea, to seek medical attention and contact the CHP immediately. The CHP has set up an enquiry hotline (2125 2372) which operates from Monday to Friday from 9am to 5.30pm.

The personnel from the Centre for Food Safety and the Environmental Hygiene Branch of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) conducted a site investigation at the food premises last night (June 20), and found that its hygienic condition was unsatisfactory. The FEHD therefore summonsed the operator of the food premises concerned. After site investigations, the FEHD considered a thorough cleaning and disinfection shall be conducted in the food premises. The management is co-operating and will temporarily close the food premises for a thorough cleaning and disinfection from today onwards. Business will resume upon a satisfactory review by the FEHD. Food and environmental samples were taken by the personnel from the FEHD for testing, and an investigation is ongoing.

To prevent foodborne diseases, members of the public are reminded to

maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times. When dining out:

- Patronise only reliable and licensed restaurants;
- Avoid eating raw seafood;
- Be a discerning consumer in choosing cold dishes including sashimi, sushi and raw oysters, at a buffet;
- Pre-cooked or leftover foods should be stored and reheated properly before consumption;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hotpot or barbecue meal;
- Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
- Use two sets of chopsticks and utensils to handle raw and cooked foods;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine or wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after using the toilet.

Approved Ma Tau Kok Outline Zoning Plan referred back for amendment

The Town Planning Board (the Board) announced today (June 21) that the Secretary for Development has referred the approved Ma Tau Kok Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) to the Board for amendment to reflect the latest land use proposals.

The OZP incorporating the amendments will be exhibited for public inspection under the provisions of the Town Planning Ordinance.

The Ma Tau Kok OZP was last approved by the Chief Executive in Council in September 2023.

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (June 21) released the latest grading of water quality for 39 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and

one non-gazetted beach (see Note 2).

Fourteen beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), 20 as Fair (Grade 2), and six as Poor (Grade 3).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Chung Hom Kok Beach	Middle Bay Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach*	Repulse Bay Beach*
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	South Bay Beach*
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	St. Stephen's Beach
Kiu Tsui Beach	Tong Fuk Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	Trio Beach
Lo So Shing Beach	Turtle Cove Beach

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach*	Lido Beach*
Cafeteria New Beach	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Casam Beach*	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*
Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Pui O Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Shek O Beach*
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach	Silverstrand Beach*
Golden Beach*	Stanley Main Beach*
Hoi Mei Wan Beach	Tai Po Lung Mei Beach*
Kadoorie Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach

Grade 3 beaches are:

Approach Beach	Cafeteria Old Beach
Big Wave Bay Beach*	Castle Peak Beach
Butterfly Beach*	Ting Kau Beach*

Compared with the grading released last week, Kwun Yam Beach and Trio Beach have been upgraded from Grade 2 to Grade 1, and Kadoorie Beach from Grade 3 to Grade 2. Big Wave Bay Beach and Butterfly Beach have been changed from Grade 2 to Grade 3.

"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.

Note 1: Lifesaving services are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at 21 gazetted beaches, marked with an asterisk (*) above, from June 1. Due to the damage caused to the footpaths leading to Chung Hom Kok Beach by landslides, the beach is temporarily closed until further notice. For details, please refer to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department's Special Announcement (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/index.html).

Note 2: This refers to Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach which is a non-gazetted beach that has no lifesaving service.

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be

supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on June 20 to noon today (June 21), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 263 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan"

(www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 61 082 samples of food imported from Japan (including 39 519 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 14 992 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Appointments to Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission

The Government announced today (June 21) that the Chief Executive has appointed Mr Philip Chen Nan-lok and Professor Nancy Ip Yuk-yu, and reappointed Mr Justice Jeremy Poon Shiu-chor and Madam Justice Carlye Chu Fun-ling as members of the Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission (the Commission) for the period from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2026.

Meanwhile, Mrs Pamela Chan Wong Shui and Professor Liu Pak-wai, serving members of the Commission, will retire from the Commission on June 30, 2024.

"We wish to express our gratitude to Mrs Pamela Chan Wong Shui and Professor Liu Pak-wai for their invaluable advice rendered to the Commission during their term of office, and for their contributions to upholding Hong Kong's judicial independence," a Government spokesman said.

The functions of the Commission are to advise or make recommendations to the Chief Executive regarding the filling of vacancies in judicial offices, representations from a judicial officer concerning conditions of service referred to it by the Chief Executive, and any matter affecting judicial officers which may be prescribed or which the Chief Executive may refer to it.

The membership list with effect from July 1, 2024, is as follows:

Ex-officio Chairman

Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal

Members

Secretary for Justice (ex-officio member)

Mr Justice Jeremy Poon Shiu-chor

Madam Justice Carlye Chu Fun-ling

Mr Victor Dawes, SC

Ms Melissa Kaye Pang

Mr Carlson Tong

Mr Philip Chen Nan-lok

Professor Nancy Ip Yuk-yu