

# 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 March 20 to noon today (March 21), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 106 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](http://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](http://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](http://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 37 606 samples of food imported from Japan (including 25 128 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 10 378 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

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## **EPD convictions in February**

Twenty-nine convictions were recorded in February 2024 for breaches of legislation enforced by the Environmental Protection Department.

Five of the convictions were under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance, two were under the Noise Control Ordinance, 10 were under the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation, one was under the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance, and 11 were under the Waste Disposal Ordinance.

A company was fined \$20,000, which was the heaviest fine in February, for failing to comply with an air pollution abatement notice.

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## **20 building plans approved in January**

The Buildings Department approved 20 building plans in January, with eight on Hong Kong Island, seven in Kowloon and five in the New Territories.

Of the approved plans, 13 were for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, four were for commercial developments, and three were for community services development.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on six building projects which, when completed, will provide 5 849 square metres of gross floor area for domestic use involving 276 units, and 60 361 sq m of gross floor area for non-domestic use. The department has received notification of commencement of superstructure works for six building projects.

The department also issued 20 occupation permits, with four on Hong Kong Island, eight in Kowloon and eight in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the gross floor area for domestic use was 223 092 sq m involving 4 623 units, and 99 833 sq m was for non-domestic use.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in January totalled about \$17.8 billion.

In addition, five demolition consents involving five building structures were issued.

The department received 2 724 reports about unauthorised building works

(UBWs) in January and issued 546 removal orders on UBWs.

The full version of the Monthly Digest for January can be viewed on the Buildings Department's homepage ([www.bd.gov.hk](http://www.bd.gov.hk)).

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## [Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases issues recommendations on seasonal influenza vaccination for 2024-25 season in Hong Kong](#)

The Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) under the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (March 21) issued recommendations on seasonal influenza vaccination for the forthcoming 2024-25 influenza season in Hong Kong, after reviewing the scientific evidence, local data, latest recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and overseas practices.

The SCVPD recommended that the priority groups for receiving the seasonal influenza vaccine in the 2024-25 season be the same as the season in 2023-24, covering healthcare workers, persons aged 50 years or above, pregnant women, residents of residential care homes, persons with chronic medical problems, children and adolescents aged six months to under 18 years, poultry workers, as well as pig farmers and pig-slaughtering industry personnel.

Moreover, the SCVPD recommended that the composition of the seasonal influenza vaccines for the upcoming 2024-25 season should follow the WHO's recommendations for the 2024-25 Northern Hemisphere influenza season.

Regarding vaccine types, inactivated influenza vaccines, live attenuated influenza vaccine (i.e. nasal vaccine) and recombinant influenza vaccine are recommended for use in Hong Kong. Both quadrivalent and trivalent seasonal influenza vaccines could be used in the 2024-25 season.

A spokesman of the CHP said, "Seasonal influenza vaccine offers protection against influenza and its complications. Members of the public, except those with known contraindications, should receive seasonal influenza vaccine annually for personal protection. As the latest surveillance data indicates the overall influenza activity in Hong Kong remained at an elevated level, unvaccinated individuals, in particular young children and older adults, should receive influenza vaccination as soon as possible to enhance

protection."

Details of the SCVPD recommendations are available on the CHP website at [www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/24008.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/24008.html).

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## **Public should beware of scam video about investment plan purported to be recommended by CE**

A Government spokesman today (March 21) again advised members of the public to stay vigilant about forged video clips created by artificial intelligence circulating online about an investment plan purported to be recommended by the Chief Executive. The Government clarified that the so-called remarks by the Chief Executive are fictitious, and vehemently condemned those who have attempted deception in the name of the Chief Executive.

The spokesman reminded the public to be cautious regarding similar investment-related advertisements or promotional videos. They should not provide their personal information online, sign up for mobile applications or open any links. Members of the public should remain vigilant and verify the authenticity of such content.

The incident has been referred to Police for a follow-up investigation.