

# CS visits Hong Kong Observatory

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, visited the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) today (July 15) to learn about its latest developments. Joining him were four participants of the "Be a Government Official for a Day" programme.

Mr Cheung first received a briefing from the Director of the HKO, Mr Shun Chi-ming, on the latest developments of the department, particularly in enhancing Hong Kong's preparedness for natural disasters and providing meteorological and related services through science, innovation and partnership.

Mr Cheung then proceeded to the Central Forecasting Office for an update on HKO's round-the-clock services on weather forecast for use by the public and the shipping, aviation, industrial and engineering sectors, as well as their work on monitoring radiation levels. He was also given a tour of HKO TV studio.

Mr Cheung was pleased to learn that HKO made good use of social media, such as its Facebook page and Instagram platform, in disseminating weather information and enhancing communication with the public. HKO has all along played an active role in supporting the plan for smart city development. It has set up microclimate stations at HKO Headquarters and other locations across the territory to collect weather data in close proximity, with an aim to facilitate big data analytics as well as study of urban microclimates and weather changes.

Mr Cheung also visited the Earthquake Monitoring and Tsunami Warning Centre where he was provided with detailed briefing on the procedures for collection and analysis of real-time seismic data from seismological stations in Hong Kong and across the globe, as well as dissemination of earthquake information to the public.

He commended HKO's colleagues for their dedication in reducing the impact of inclement weather on Hong Kong's society and economy.

Prior to his departure, Mr Cheung visited the History Room, where he was presented with the achievement and transformation of HKO since it was established 136 years ago. He praised HKO for its dedication to the vision of being "A Model of Excellence in Protecting Lives and Building Together a Better Society through Science". Mr Cheung also encouraged colleagues of HKO to continue serving the public in a dedicated and professional manner.

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# Hong Kong Customs combats supply and sale of counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs conducted an anti-counterfeiting operation from July 10 to yesterday (July 14) in various districts to combat the supply and sale of counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products. During the operation, Customs smashed two suppliers distributing suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products. Seven shops and three storage facilities were raided and a total of about 6 400 items of suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products with an estimated market value of about \$590,000 were seized.

Customs earlier conducted patrols and discovered shops selling suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products. After an in-depth investigation with the assistance of trademark owners, Customs officers took enforcement action in various districts during the above-mentioned period.

Six retail shops in Causeway Bay, Yau Ma Tei and Sheung Shui were first raided and about 1 400 items of suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products were seized. After further investigation, Customs then cracked down on two suppliers distributing suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products. A retail shop in Sheung Shui and three storage facilities of the two suppliers located in Yuen Long and Fanling were raided. About 5 000 items of suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products were seized.

During the operation, suspected counterfeit cosmetics and skin care products including toner, lotion, moisturising gel and sunscreen were seized. Seven men and five women, comprising five directors, one shop owner and six salespersons, aged between 23 and 46, were arrested.

Investigation is ongoing and all arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

The Divisional Commander (Intellectual Property General Investigation) of Customs, Ms Peggy Tam, said at a press conference today (July 15) that Customs has been taking stringent enforcement actions against the sale of counterfeit goods. She reminded traders to be cautious and prudent in merchandising since the sale of counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions. She also appealed to consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected infringing activities to

Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).



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## Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 15) 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 that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From July 7 to 13, four community-acquired LD cases were reported:

1. A male patient, aged 53 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Block 1, Tsui Ning Garden, 2 Fung On Street, Tuen Mun District;
2. A male patient, aged 60 with underlying illnesses, who was in Guangzhou during the entire incubation period;
3. A male patient, aged 75 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Tin Lai House, Tin Wan Estate, Tin Wan Street, Southern District; and
4. A male patient, aged 71 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Block 5, Hong Sing Garden, 1 Po Lam Road North, Sai Kung District.

"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 July 13 this year, 53 LD cases have been reported. In 2018 and 2017, there were 105 and 72 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 which 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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## **CHP investigates hand, foot and mouth disease outbreak in kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Kwun Tong**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (July 15) investigating an outbreak of hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) in a kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Kwun Tong, and again urged the public, schools and institutions to maintain strict hand, personal and environmental hygiene.

The 20 affected students, 16 boys and four girls aged 2 to 5, have developed fever, oral ulcers and rash over the hands or feet since June 29. Eighteen of them sought medical attention and none required hospitalisation. All patients are in a stable condition.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit to the school and advised the management on necessary infection control and preventive measures. The school has been put under medical surveillance. Investigations are ongoing.

"HFMD is common in children while adult cases may also appear. It is usually caused by enteroviruses (EVs) such as Coxsackie virus and EV71. It is clinically characterised by maculopapular rashes or vesicular lesions occurring on the palms, soles and other parts of the body such as the buttocks and thighs. Vesicular lesions and ulcers may also be found in the oral cavity. Sometimes patients present mainly with painful ulcers at the back of the mouth, namely herpangina, without rash on the hands or feet," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"HFMD occurs throughout the year with the usual peak occurring from May to July. A smaller peak may also occur from October to December. According to the CHP's latest surveillance data, the local activity of hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) is currently at a high level. As young children are more susceptible, parents should stay alert to their health. Institutional

outbreaks may occur where HFMD can easily spread among young children with close contact," the spokesman added.

To prevent HFMD, members of the public, and especially the management of institutions, should take heed of the following preventive measures:

- Maintain good air circulation;
- Wash hands before meals and after going to the toilet or handling diapers or other stool-soiled materials;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly, especially when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and oral discharges properly;
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as furniture, toys and commonly shared items with 1:99 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite with 99 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes, and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol;
- Use absorbent disposable towels to wipe away obvious contaminants such as respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, and then disinfect the surface and neighbouring areas with 1:49 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite with 49 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol;
- Children who are ill should be kept out of school until their fever and rash have subsided and all the vesicles have dried and crusted;
- Avoid going to overcrowded places; and
- Parents should maintain close communication with schools to let them know the latest situation of the sick children.

The public may visit the CHP's page on [HFMD and EV71 infection](#) and [Public Health Advice for Play Facilities](#) for more information.

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## Excessive preservatives found in Shanghai noodles sample

â€‹The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (July 15) that a sample of loose-packed Shanghai noodles was found to contain a preservative, benzoic acid, at a level exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the case.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "Subsequent to announcing earlier that a

sample of Shanghai noodles taken from a shop in Tin Shui Wai was found to contain excessive benzoic acid, the CFS took a sample from another batch of Shanghai noodles from the same shop for testing during a follow-up investigation. A similar irregularity was detected, with the test result showing that the sample contained benzoic acid at a level of 2 100 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 1 000 ppm."

The CFS had informed the vendor concerned about the irregularity and the vendor has already stopped selling the food item in question, according to the CFS' instructions. The CFS is tracing the source of the affected product. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

Benzoic acid is a preservative of low toxicity. Based on the level detected in the sample, adverse health effects would not be caused from normal consumption.

The spokesman reminded the food trade that the use of preservatives in food must comply with the Preservatives in Food Regulation (Cap 132BD). Offenders are liable for a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action.