

Suspected red tides sighted at some beaches

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 (May 30) that due to suspected red tide sightings, red flags have been hoisted at Castle Peak Beach, Cafeteria Old Beach, Cafeteria New Beach and Golden Beach in Tuen Mun District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches until further notice.

One more nomination for Yuen Long District Council by-election received

One more nomination for the Shap Pat Heung West Constituency was received by the Returning Officer for the by-election of the Yuen Long District Council today (May 30). No nomination was received today for the San Tin Constituency.

Particulars of the nominees are available on the Electoral Affairs Commission website (www.eac.hk/en/distco/2019yld_candidates.htm).

The nomination period will run until June 10. If the number of validly nominated candidates for a constituency is more than one at the by-election, a poll will be held on July 14, 2019 (Sunday) for the by-election for that constituency.

Inter-departmental pre-typhoon table-top exercise successfully concluded (with photo)

The Security Bureau today (May 30) held an inter-departmental table-top

exercise in the Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre at the Central Government Offices. The exercise simulated a super typhoon scenario to test the preparedness, response and recovery capabilities as well as the decision-making process and interoperability of relevant government bureaux and departments.

The exercise aimed to try out new initiatives and arrangements following a review concluded by the Government earlier on the handling of super typhoons. These included the activation of the new Steering Committee to be chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, and new work arrangements after a Typhoon Signal Number 8 is cancelled in exceptional cases. A variety of spin-off scenarios were also added to test the co-ordination, contingency measures and capabilities of participating bureaux and departments.

A spokesman for the Security Bureau said, "The exercise concluded successfully, with officers from more than 30 bureaux, departments and other external parties involved in the handling of natural disasters taking part. The Government will assess the outcome of the exercise with a view to enhancing relevant bureaux and departments' general awareness and co-ordination in various aspects of contingency handling."



[Transcript of remarks by SFH at media session](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, after attending the World No Tobacco Day award presentation ceremony today (May 30):

Reporter: Professor Chan, are you worried that lawmakers are dragging their feet in scrutinising the cigarette bill because they are dealing with the extradition law?

Secretary for Food and Health: The Bills Committee (Bills Committee on

Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019)'s work on e-cigarettes is ongoing. We notice that it is a bit sluggish in the progress. We hope that the work of the Bills Committee will continue so that the bill can be scrutinised as soon as possible in the Legislative Council.

Reporter: (About the Government's work in the next five to 10 years on smoking.)

Secretary for Food and Health: In terms of tobacco control, first of all, throughout the past 30 years, the Government has been working very hard on tobacco control through a multi-pronged approach – legislation, taxation, public education as well as provision of smoking cessation services. The World No Tobacco Day award given to the Department of Health today recognises the hard work of the department and the Government in tobacco control work in the past 30 years.

We are facing a lot of challenges such as a number of smoking alternative products coming out on the market specially targeting our young people. This would not only harm the health of our young people and our citizens in Hong Kong but it would also bring up the smoking prevalence in Hong Kong. In the '80s, the smoking prevalence in Hong Kong was about 23 per cent. Through the past 30 years of hard work, it has gone down to 10 per cent. We are aiming at getting it down to a single digit as soon as possible. In terms of our action plan of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), we have set the target of our smoking prevalence to 7.8 per cent by 2025.

In the coming years, we will be adopting a multi-pronged approach. We will also work closely with the World Health Organization (WHO) to understand the world trend. In fact, during the latest WHO World Health Assembly, I met with Dr Douglas Bettcher, who is in charge of the NCD strategy in the WHO. Not only we exchanged views on the work on tobacco control, he also recognised the work of tobacco control in Hong Kong and would like us to share our work experience with other countries and places that have a higher smoking prevalence.

There are a few directions in the coming years. First of all, we are now currently scrutinising the legislation on the banning of e-cigarettes. We need to work on the alternative smoking products that have an opportunity to raise our smoking prevalence. Secondly, we also want to protect the general public who are not smokers in terms of prevention of second-hand smoke. So we would expand the no-smoking areas at bus stops. We are working towards that. We have already done the work on public transport interchanges. There are many bus stops in Hong Kong and therefore we need to continue to work on those (bus stops) as well. The third area is about our young people. On one hand, we have to prevent young people from taking up conventional smoking products as well as new smoking products. On the other hand, we have to strengthen the work, not only on education to younger generation but also help them to quit smoking.

Finally, I think strengthening the smoking cessation services is also another area that we should put more resources in. It is important if we want to lower down our smoking prevalence. There are two directions: one is to

prevent people from taking up smoking, and the second is to help people quit smoking. Smoking cessation is another area we need to put more emphasis and resources not only for people quitting conventional cigarettes but also new or alternative smoking products. Together with our partners, academia, non-governmental organisations and also our allies in education, the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health as well as all the supporters in Hong Kong and our general public, we will push ahead with our smoking cessation services and tobacco control.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Three cases of illegal removal of asbestos fined

A works company and a person-in-charge of works were convicted at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (May 30) for contravening the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO) for the illegal demolition of corrugated asbestos cement sheet (CACS) roofing. In addition, the owner of a residential unit was convicted at the same court for contravening the APCO by failing to comply with the requirements of an asbestos abatement notice (AAN). They were fined a total of \$11,000.

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said the department conducted proactive inspections as well as following up on reports from members of the public in October and November last year and found the illegal demolition of CACS roofing at three premises at Shui Ning House, Kwun Tong, on Nanking Street, Yau Ma Tei, and on Junction Road, Kowloon City. After investigation, the EPD confirmed that, among the above-mentioned cases, in two of them no written notice was given to the EPD at least 28 days in advance of the commencement of the works in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. In one of the cases, no registered asbestos contractor (RAC) was hired to carry out the demolition. Moreover, one residential unit owner concerned failed to hire a RAC to conduct asbestos abatement works by a deadline in accordance with the requirements of an AAN issued by the EPD. The EPD, under the APCO, initiated prosecutions against the person-in-charge, the residential unit owner and the works company involved in the case, namely Tin Kee Engineering Limited.

The spokesman reminded works companies and persons-in-charge of works that the EPD would follow up seriously on every suspected case of illegal removal of asbestos materials. Renovation and refurbishment at buildings involving the demolition of asbestos-containing materials must be carried out by registered asbestos contractors in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements and the code of practice on asbestos control. Contractors who carry out works involving asbestos must give not less than 28 days' written

notice to the EPD prior to the commencement of such works. Otherwise, they are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000. In addition, works companies and building owners must strictly comply with the requirements of an AAN issued by the EPD and hire registered professionals to complete the demolition and handling of asbestos-containing materials by a deadline. Otherwise, they may commit an offence. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment.

Members of the public can help combat illegal activities and safeguard public health by calling the EPD departmental hotline at 2838 3111 to make a report if they witness any illegal works involving asbestos.