

CFS announces test results of targeted surveillance on use of sulphur dioxide in meat

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (February 15) released the test results of a targeted food surveillance project on the use of sulphur dioxide in meat. Among some 600 samples tested, except for seven samples found to contain sulphur dioxide, a non-permitted preservative in fresh meat, which were announced earlier, all the remaining samples passed the test. The overall satisfactory rate was 98.8 per cent.

"In view of detection of the preservative in fresh meat samples in the past, the CFS has conducted targeted surveillance projects regularly on the use of the chemical in meat in recent years. Samples of beef, pork and mutton were collected from fresh provision shops, supermarkets, market meat stalls and online retailers for testing. The sampling locations also included meat shops and stalls which had previous records of selling meat containing sulphur dioxide," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Sulphur dioxide is a commonly used preservative in a variety of foods including dried fruits, pickled vegetables and meat products such as sausages and grilled burgers. However, under the Preservatives in Food Regulation (Cap 132BD), it is not permitted in fresh or chilled meat. Nonetheless, individual meat traders have been found illegally using sulphur dioxide to make meat look fresher. Sulphur dioxide is of low toxicity. As it is water-soluble, most of it can be removed through washing and cooking. However, susceptible individuals who are allergic to sulphur dioxide may experience breathing difficulty, headache and nausea.

Under the Regulation, the maximum penalty upon conviction of using sulphur dioxide in fresh or chilled meat is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The spokesman reminded the food trade to comply with the law and not to sell fresh or chilled meat containing sulphur dioxide. Members of the public should purchase food from reliable market stalls or fresh provision shops, and avoid buying or consuming meat which is unnaturally red.

Tenders invited for Site Formation and

Infrastructure Works at Wang Chau, Yuen Long – Contract 1

â€‹The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) today (February 15) invited tenders for the contract for Site Formation and Infrastructure Works at Wang Chau, Yuen Long – Contract 1.

The works mainly comprise:

- * formation of land and construction of associated retaining walls and slopes;
- * construction of a new single two-lane carriageway with a connected underpass, footpath and pick-up/drop off areas;
- * improvement works at the junction of Long Ping Road and Fung Chi Road; and
- * ancillary works including drainage, sewerage, waterworks and landscaping works.

The works are scheduled to commence in July 2019 and will take about 34 months to complete.

The CEDD has commissioned Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Ltd to design and supervise the works. Interested contractors may obtain the forms of tender and further particulars from the company on Level 5, Festival Walk, 80 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon Tong, or call the company at 2268 3560 during office hours.

The invitation to tender was gazetted today. The closing time for the tender is noon on April 12, 2019.

Details of the tender notice are available at the CEDD's website (www.cedd.gov.hk/eng/tender/contract/tender/index.html#CV/2017/07).

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Special arrangement for renewal of vehicle and driving licences

The special arrangement for renewal of expiring and expired vehicle and driving licences implemented in previous years before Budget Day has proved to be effective in avoiding a rush. The arrangement will be adopted again this year.

"The special arrangement was effective in maintaining the number of applications for renewal of vehicle or driving licences at more or less the normal level during the last few days before the Budget announcement. There was no abnormal queuing and the arrangement was well received by the public," a Transport Department (TD) spokesman said today (February 15).

Details of the arrangement for this year are as follows:

- * All vehicle licences eligible for renewal on or before Budget Day (February 27), i.e. vehicles that are registered at the time of renewal and with licence expiry dates falling on or before June 26, can be renewed at the present rate, whether for four months or 12 months, at any time up to and including June 26.
- * All full Hong Kong driving licences and driving instructor's licences

eligible for renewal on or before Budget Day (February 27), i.e. those expiring on or before June 26 and those that have expired for less than three years at the time of renewal, can be renewed at the present rate at any time up to and including June 26.

The special arrangement only applies to the renewal of vehicle licences, full driving licences and driving instructor's licences that meet the conditions above. It does not apply to any other licensing services.

It is not necessary for eligible licence holders to rush to TD licensing offices to renew their licences on speculation that those licence fees may increase in the coming Budget.

"The arrangement is made solely to deal with the potential problem of long queues. The content of the Budget is a separate issue on which the TD has no information," the spokesman emphasised.

At present, applications for renewal of vehicle and driving licences can be submitted online, by post and via the drop-in boxes in the four licensing offices of the TD and designated Post Offices. Members of the public are encouraged to renew their licences through these channels.

Appointments to Committee on Financial Assistance for Family Members of those who Sacrifice their Lives to Save Others announced

The Government today (February 15) announced the appointment of three new members and the re-appointment of one incumbent member to the Committee on Financial Assistance for Family Members of those who Sacrifice their Lives to Save Others for a term of two years with effect from today.

The three new members are Mr Law King-shing, Ms May Wong May-kwan and Miss Edna Chow On-lai.

Mr Law King-shing is the Chairman of the Kwai Tsing District Council and currently serves in the Municipal Services Appeals Board.

Ms May Wong May-kwan is the Executive Director of Hans Andersen Club and has served in the Advisory Committee of the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged.

Miss Edna Chow On-lai is the Regional Training and Development Manager of SMCP Asia Limited and currently serves in the Committee on Services for

Youth at Risk.

Incumbent member Ms Liu Po-chu has been re-appointed. She is a professional accountant and currently serves in the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board.

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, welcomed the appointments and said he looked forward to working closely with members of the Committee in the new term. He also thanked the three outgoing members, Mr Suen Kai-cheong, Mr Weber Lo Wai-pak and Dr Annissa Lui Wai-ling, for their contribution to the work of the Committee during their term of appointment.

The Committee considers and approves applications under the Financial Assistance Scheme to Family Members of those who Sacrifice their Lives to Save Others. The Scheme represents the Government's recognition of the brave acts and sacrifice undertaken by these individuals and seeks to alleviate the financial hardship that their family members may face as a consequence of their death.

The membership list of the Committee with effect from today is as follows:

Chairman:

Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Members:

Miss Edna Chow On-lai

Mr Law King-shing

Ms Liu Po-chu

Ms May Wong May-kwan