

CHP investigates suspected food poisoning outbreak at institution in Southern District

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (February 1) investigating a suspected outbreak of food poisoning at an institution in Southern District, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The outbreak involved 25 males aged 19 to 41 who developed abdominal pain and diarrhoea about eight to 23 hours after having lunch at an institution in Southern District on January 29.

Two of them sought medical attention but none required hospitalisation. All affected persons are in a stable condition.

"We have alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

To prevent food-borne 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;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hot pot 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 food;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine and wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade

practice at medicine shop

â€‹Hong Kong Customs today (February 1) arrested a salesman of a medicine shop suspected to have applied a false trade description in the course of selling a proprietary medicine, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TD0).

Customs officers conducted a test-buy operation at a medicine shop in Tsuen Wan today. A salesman was suspected to have applied a false trade description on a brand of medicine by stating it was a particular brand of medicine in the course of selling medicines. Customs officers then arrested the 25-year-old man.

Investigation is ongoing and the arrested man has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TD0 and consumers to procure products at reputable shops.

Under the TD0, any person who in the course of any trade or business applies a false trade description to any goods 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 violations of the TD0 to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

Temporary traffic and transport arrangements for tram track renewal works in Western District from next Friday

The Transport Department (TD) today (February 1) reminded the public that to facilitate the tram track renewal works at Belcher's Street, parts of the middle lane of Belcher's Street near Kwan Yick Street will be temporarily closed from about 10am next Friday (February 8) to 11.59pm on February 12 (Tuesday).

During the above works period, all vehicles exceeding 5 metres in length will be prohibited from turning left from Belcher's Street onto Kwan Yick Street. Moreover, the Kennedy Town Tram Terminus at Catchick Street outside

the Merton Tower 2 will also be suspended from about 10am on February 8 (Friday) to 1.30am on February 13 (Wednesday). Affected passengers should proceed to the westbound tram stop at Catchick Street near Davis Street (No. 104W) to take the eastbound tram services.

Appropriate traffic signs will be erected on site to guide motorists.

The TD anticipates that the traffic in the vicinity of the above road sections will be relatively busy. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience in case of traffic congestion. Members of the public are advised to be alert to the latest traffic news or the department's website (www.td.gov.hk).

Relaxation of waiver application for existing industrial buildings

The Development Bureau (DEVB) announced today (February 1) the relaxation of the waiver application requirement (the Permission) with immediate effect to facilitate non-industrial uses for a number of sectors in individual units of existing industrial buildings (IBs).

A spokesperson for the DEVB said, "The revised arrangement is one of six measures to implement the initiative announced by the Chief Executive in the 2018 Policy Address to revitalise and optimise the use of IBs.

"The Permission will help address the demand from a number of sectors, including the arts and cultural sectors, creative industries, and innovation and technology sectors, for safe and lawful use of IBs. This will also help meet Hong Kong's changing social and economic needs, and make better use of valuable land resources."

Under the existing land administration mechanism, premises in existing IBs may only be used for industrial uses involving a manufacturing process according to the land leases executed in the past, even though the Town Planning Board has over the years broadened the always-permitted uses of existing IBs to include certain non-industrial uses for the purposes of the planning regime. All along, if an owner of IB premises wishes to pursue an always-permitted non-industrial use under the planning regime, the owner or an authorised person may apply to the Lands Department (LandsD) for waiving temporarily the user restrictions under the land lease. Unless exempted under any prevailing policy, a temporary waiver application is subject to payment of an administrative fee, and a waiver fee if approved.

Under the new arrangement, which takes immediate effect for an initial

five-year period, IB owners, without the need to apply for any temporary waiver and pay any fee, are permitted to put individual units of IBs to the following five specific non-industrial uses, provided that such uses are permitted under the land use zoning of the sites concerned on the relevant Outline Zoning Plans (OZP) as "Column 1" (i.e. always permitted) uses:

- Art Studio;
- Office (Audio-visual Recording Studio);
- Office (Design and Media Production);
- Office (used by "specified creative industries" only (i.e. design and media production firms, printing and publishing industries, film companies, and film-related trade organisations)); and
- Research, Design and Development Centre.

For the sake of public safety, the five uses covered in the Permission must not involve any uses or activities that attract visiting members of the general public by providing direct services or goods, such as conducting hobby classes, exhibitions and sales activities, or providing rehearsal facilities for any party other than the operator, owner and tenant(s) of the premises.

Information regarding the zoning of an IB and the "Column 1" always-permitted uses specified in the relevant OZP is available on the website of the Town Planning Board (www.ozp.tpb.gov.hk). IB owners or users may also consult relevant professionals as appropriate.

If an owner wishes to put an individual unit to a non-industrial use falling outside the Permission, the owner should apply to the LandsD for a temporary waiver and pay a waiver fee (if approved) in accordance with the prevailing mechanism. In the event of receiving any complaint about a use falling outside the Permission and constituting a breach of the lease condition, the LandsD will conduct investigation and lease enforcement action as appropriate after seeking advice from the relevant bureaux.

The Permission is subject to all other terms and conditions applicable as stipulated in the relevant land lease, the Buildings Ordinance, the Town Planning Ordinance and any other relevant legislation. Also, it shall not be relied on to prejudice any rights and remedies of other parties under the deed of mutual covenant of the IBs involved.

Government will review the need for extending the Permission towards the end of the five-year period and make an announcement in a timely manner.

For details of the Permission, please visit DEVB's website (www.devb.gov.hk/en/issues_in_focus/index.html) or LandsD's website (www.landsd.gov.hk/en/reIntBuild/index.htm). For enquiries about the application of the Permission to individual IBs, please contact relevant District Lands Office of LandsD.

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cannabis buds (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 2.1 kilograms of suspected cannabis buds with an estimated market value of about \$440,000 at Hong Kong International Airport on January 28.

Customs officers inspected a parcel arriving in Hong Kong from Canada on January 28 and seized the batch of suspected cannabis buds inside the parcel.

After follow-up investigation, Customs officers yesterday (January 31) arrested a 27-year-old man in Kwun Tong suspected to be in connection with the case.

Investigation is ongoing and the arrested man has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Customs also reminds the public that cannabis and tetrahydro-cannabinol (THC) are classified as dangerous drugs under the Ordinance. Importation of products (including food and drinks) containing cannabis or THC into Hong Kong is prohibited unless the relevant provisions in the Ordinance are complied with. In order to avoid breaching the law inadvertently, special attention should be paid to the packaging labels of food and drinks.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

