

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (January 11) released the latest grading of water quality for four gazetted beaches which are open all year round for swimming.

Four beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1).

Grade 1 beaches are:

C
l
e
a
r
W
a
t
e
r
B
a
y
S
e
c
o
n
d
B
e
a
c
h
G
o
l
d
e
n
B
e
a
c
h

R e p u l s e B a y B e a c h S i l v e r s t r a n d B e a c h

Compared with the grading released last week, there was no change in the grading for these beaches.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, an EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a storm or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the department's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

Judicial appointments

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary today (January 11) announced five judicial appointments covering the High Court and the District Court.

The appointments include one Justice of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of the High Court, three Judges of the Court of First Instance of the High Court and the Principal Family Court Judge. The appointments are made by the Chief Executive on the recommendation of the Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission. All appointments will take effect from January 14, 2019.

Justice of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of the High Court

The Honourable Mr Justice Thomas Au Hing-cheung is appointed as Justice of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of the High Court.

Judges of the Court of First Instance of the High Court

His Honour Judge Poon Siu-tung, Her Honour Judge Marlene Ng May-ling and His Honour Judge Lee Wan-tang are appointed as Judges of the Court of First Instance of the High Court.

Principal Family Court Judge

His Honour Judge Chan Chan-kok is appointed as the Principal Family Court Judge.

The biographical notes of the appointees are as follows:

The Honourable Mr Justice Thomas Au Hing-cheung

Mr Justice Au was born in Hong Kong in 1963. He obtained an LL.B. from the University of Hong Kong in 1996 and a Bachelor of Civil Law Degree from the University of Oxford in 1997. He acquired a P.C.LL. from the University of Hong Kong in 1998. He was called to the Bar in Hong Kong in 1998 and was in private practice between 1999 and 2007. He was appointed as District Judge in 2007 and as Judge of the Court of First Instance of the High Court in 2009.

His Honour Judge Poon Siu-tung

His Honour Judge Poon was born in Hong Kong in 1967. He obtained an LL.B. and P.C.LL. from the University of Hong Kong in 1990 and 1993

respectively. He was called to the Bar in Hong Kong in 1994 and was in private practice between 1994 and 2002. He was appointed as Permanent Magistrate in 2002, as District Judge in 2009 and as the Chief District Judge in 2012. He was appointed as the judge with special responsibility for the Executive Body of the Hong Kong Judicial Institute in 2017.

Her Honour Judge Marlene Ng May-ling

Her Honour Judge Ng was born in Hong Kong in 1960. She obtained an LL.B. and P.C.LL. from the University of Hong Kong in 1982 and 1983 respectively. She was admitted as a solicitor in Hong Kong in 1990. She was also admitted as a Solicitor of Supreme Court of England and Wales and as a Barrister and Solicitor of Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory in 1991, and as a Solicitor of Supreme Court of New South Wales of Australia in 1993. She was in private practice as a solicitor between 1990 and 2002. She was appointed as District Judge in 2003.

His Honour Judge Lee Wan-tang

His Honour Judge Lee was born in Hong Kong in 1966. He obtained an LL.B and P.C.LL. from the University of Hong Kong in 1989 and 1991 respectively. He was admitted as a solicitor in Hong Kong in 1993 and was called to the Bar in Hong Kong in 2000. He joined the then Legal Department as Crown Counsel in 1993 and was promoted to Senior Crown Counsel in 1995. He was appointed as Deputy Principal Government Counsel in 2005 and took up the post of Senior Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions in the same year. He joined the Judiciary as District Judge in 2013.

His Honour Judge Chan Chan-kok

His Honour Judge Chan was born in Macao in 1960. He obtained an LL.B. from the University of London in 1989 and a P.C.LL. from the University of Hong Kong in 1990. He acquired an LL.M. from the City University of Hong Kong in 1997. He was admitted as a solicitor in Hong Kong in 1992 and in England and Wales in 1993. He was in private practice between 1992 and 1998. He was appointed as Permanent Magistrate in 1998 and as District Judge in 2009.

Subsidy amount for Non-means-tested Subsidy Scheme for Self-financing Undergraduate Studies in Hong Kong in 2019/20 academic year announced

The Government announced today (January 11) that the subsidy amount of

the Non-means-tested Subsidy Scheme for Self-financing Undergraduate Studies in Hong Kong (NMTSS) in the 2019/20 academic year will be adjusted upward according to the movement of the Composite Consumer Price Index. The annual subsidy amount of the NMTSS will be increased from \$30,800 in the current academic year to \$31,300.

The adjusted subsidy amount is applicable to both new and continuing students meeting the criteria. The subsidies are tenable for the normal duration of the programmes concerned. Eligible students enrolling in the relevant programmes will pay a tuition fee after subsidy. Students in need may still apply for student financial assistance from the Student Finance Office in respect of the actual amount of tuition fees payable.

The NMTSS was one of the priority measures announced by the Chief Executive in July 2017 to support quality education. Since the 2017/18 academic year, a non-means-tested annual subsidy has been provided to Hong Kong students who have:

(a) attained "3322" in the Hong Kong Diploma for Secondary Education Examination (i.e. level 3 for Chinese Language and English Language and level 2 for Mathematics Compulsory Part and Liberal Studies) when they are enrolled in eligible self-financing first-year-first-degree programmes; or

(b) attained sub-degree qualifications (i.e. after completing the locally accredited sub-degree programmes in relevant disciplines) when they are enrolled in eligible self-financing top-up degree programmes.

In the 2019/20 academic year, the NMTSS will cover the eligible full-time self-financing locally accredited local and non-local first-year-first-degree and top-up degree programmes offered by 16 institutions. A list of the relevant institutions and programmes for the 2019/20 cohort is in the Annex. Subsidy will be disbursed to all eligible students enrolling in the programmes covered by the NMTSS. Applications for the subsidy should be made through the institutions concerned. For details, please visit: www.cspe.edu.hk/nmtss.

Territory-wide year-end clean-up campaign launched (with photo)

With the approach of the Year of the Pig, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (January 11) commenced a three-week year-end clean-up campaign across the territory.

"To tie in with the tradition of cleaning up before the Lunar New Year, the annual year-end clean-up campaign is being conducted from today to

January 31 to call for public support and efforts to maintain cleanliness in the household, the community and public places to welcome the coming Lunar New Year," an FEHD spokesman said.

During the campaign, the FEHD will step up the cleaning of public facilities under the department's management including markets, cooked food centres, hawker bazaars, public toilets and refuse collection points. Cleaning of problematic illegal refuse dumping spots and other cleanliness operations will also be enhanced in all districts. In addition, the FEHD will conduct mosquito and rodent prevention and control operations targeting places such as old tenement buildings, streets, rear lanes, village houses and construction sites, according to each district's circumstances. Temporary junk collection points will be set up for residents to discard large items of household waste.

The spokesman also reminded operators of food premises to pay attention to hygiene conditions on their premises and urged stallholders to clean up their stalls.

"To ensure the cleanliness of public places, we will strengthen enforcement actions and issue fixed penalty notices to offenders in breach of the Fixed Penalty (Public Cleanliness and Obstruction) Ordinance for littering, spitting, illegal posting of bills or posters, feeding of pigeons or other feral birds causing dirtiness to public places, and dog fouling," the spokesman said.

The spokesman added that maintaining a clean and hygienic community hinges on everyone's co-operation and participation. He called for the concerted efforts of every member of the public to maintain environmental hygiene and enjoy a clean environment in the Year of the Pig.



Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, January 11, 2019 is 103.3 (down 0.3 against yesterday's index).