

Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 3) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, and that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From June 24 to 30, four community-acquired LD cases were reported. They are:

1. A male patient, aged 70 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Chi Wo House, Wo Che Estate, Sha Tin;
2. A male patient, aged 76 with underlying illnesses, who lived in Kam Ping Building, 63-69 Kam Ping Street, North Point, and had passed away;
3. A male patient, aged 60 with good past health, who lives in Luna Court, 53-59 Kimberly Road, Tsim Sha Tsui; and
4. A male patient, aged 76 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Tung Tat Building, 390-392 Des Voeux Road West, Sai Ying Pun.

"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 June 30, 31 LD cases have been reported in 2018. In 2017 and 2016, there were 72 and 75 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 get 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 these devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not tap water. Also, clean and maintain them regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water. 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;
- 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 (μm) 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 the 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 medical advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile (not distilled or tap) water to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain them 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- μm filters. Never leave stagnant water. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
 1. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
 2. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
 3. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
 4. 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.

Provisional statistics of retail sales for May 2018

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released the latest figures on retail sales today (July 3).

The value of total retail sales in May 2018, provisionally estimated at \$40.5 billion, increased by 12.9% over the same month in 2017. The revised estimate of the value of total retail sales in April 2018 increased by 12.2% over a year earlier. For the first five months of 2018 taken together, it was provisionally estimated that the value of total retail sales increased by 13.7% over the same period in 2017.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, the provisional estimate of the volume of total retail sales in May 2018 increased by 11.6% over a year earlier. The revised estimate of the volume of total retail sales in April 2018 increased by 11.0% over a year earlier. For the first five months of 2018 taken together, the provisional estimate of the total retail sales increased by 12.2% in volume over the same period in 2017.

Analysed by broad type of retail outlet in descending order of the provisional estimate of the value of sales and comparing May 2018 with May 2017, the value of sales of jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts increased by 23.8%. This was followed by sales of commodities in department stores (+16.7% in value); commodities in supermarkets (+2.8%); wearing apparel (+6.7%); medicines and cosmetics (+18.7%); food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (+5.9%); other consumer goods, not elsewhere classified (+20.1%); electrical goods and other consumer durable goods, not elsewhere classified (+12.8%); motor vehicles and parts (+2.3%); fuels (+17.5%); footwear, allied products and other clothing accessories (+11.9%); furniture and fixtures (+4.8%); books, newspapers, stationery and gifts (+2.5%); Chinese drugs and herbs (+3.9%); and optical shops (+13.9%).

Based on the seasonally adjusted series, the provisional estimate of the value and volume of total retail sales both increased by 2.6% in the three months ending May 2018 over the preceding three-month period.

These retail sales statistics measure the sales receipts in respect of goods sold by local retail establishments and are primarily intended for gauging the short-term business performance of the local retail sector. They cover consumer spending on goods but not on services (such as those on housing, catering, medical care and health services, transport and communication, financial services, education and entertainment) which account for over 50% of the overall consumer spending. Moreover, they include spending on goods in Hong Kong by visitors but exclude spending outside Hong Kong by Hong Kong residents. Hence they should not be regarded as indicators for measuring overall consumer spending.

Users interested in the trend of overall consumer spending should refer

to the data series of private consumption expenditure (PCE), which is a major component of the Gross Domestic Product published at quarterly intervals. Compiled from a wide range of data sources, PCE covers consumer spending on both goods (including goods purchased from all channels) and services by Hong Kong residents whether locally or abroad. Please refer to the C&SD publication "Gross Domestic Product (Quarterly)" for more details.

Commentary

A government spokesman indicated that retail sales continued to post double-digit growth over a year earlier in May, thanks to the sanguine local consumption sentiment and the visible increase in visitor arrivals.

Looking ahead, the near-term outlook for retail sales business should stay positive, given the robust labour market and sustained growth in inbound tourism. The Government will monitor the situation closely, in particular how the marked increase in external uncertainties of late may affect consumption sentiment going forward.

Further information

Table 1 presents the revised figures on value index and value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for April 2018 as well as the provisional figures for May 2018. The provisional figures on the value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet as well as the corresponding year-on-year changes for the first five months of 2018 taken together are also shown.

Table 2 presents the revised figures on volume index of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for April 2018 as well as the provisional figures for May 2018. The provisional figures on year-on-year changes for the first five months of 2018 taken together are also shown.

Table 3 shows the movements of the value and volume of total retail sales in terms of the year-on-year rate of change for a month compared with the same month in the preceding year based on the original series, and in terms of the rate of change for a three-month period compared with the preceding three-month period based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The classification of retail establishments follows the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification Version 2.0, which is used in various economic surveys for classifying economic units into different industry classes.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Report on Monthly Survey of Retail Sales". Users can download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD

(www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp320.jsp?productCode=B1080003).

Alternatively, the historical series of retail sales statistics can be downloaded in the form of a statistical table at the website of the C&SD

(www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp320.jsp?productCode=D5600089).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Distribution Services Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7400; email: mrs@censtatd.gov.hk).

Special meeting of LegCo Panel on Economic Development

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Economic Development will hold a special meeting at 8.45am tomorrow (July 4) in Conference Room 2 of the LegCo Complex to discuss the "2018-2023 Development Plans and 2019 Tariff Review of the two power companies".

Applications open for 2018 Hong Kong Youth Music Camp (Day Camp)

The 2018 Hong Kong Youth Music Camp, organised by the Music Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, will be held this month at Sai Kung Outdoor Recreation Centre. Day camp programmes will be available from Monday to Friday during July 16 and 27. Organisations, families and individual groups are welcome to join and visit music rehearsals and an exhibition on folk music, attend mini-concerts and play music games. Day camp participants can also use various recreational facilities at the camp site.

The fee of the day camp will be \$85 per person per day. A concessionary rate of \$62 will apply to children, local/full-time students, senior citizens aged 60 and above, people with disabilities and their minder and participants from subvented organisations registered with the Social Welfare Department.

Limited vacancies are now available on a first come, first served basis. Interested parties can now submit their applications to the Music Office's Hong Kong Music Centre from 10am to noon and from 2pm to 4pm from today till July 10 (except the weekend). For enquiries, please call 2598 8335 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/musicoffice.

Red flag hoisted at Shek O Beach

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 (July 3) that due to big waves, the red flag has been hoisted at Shek O Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.