

# Health risk category for Air Quality Health Index may reach "Serious" level

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has recorded higher than normal pollution levels since September 1. According to the EPD's forecast, it is expected that the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) at some general and roadside air quality monitoring stations may reach the "Serious" level later today (September 3).

Under the influence of the outer circulations of Severe Typhoon Maysak and Typhoon Haishen, a continental air stream is bringing in high background pollution to Hong Kong. The weather in Hong Kong is fine and very hot with light winds. The light wind hinders the effective dispersion of air pollutants. The intense sunshine enhances photochemical smog activity and the formation of ozone and fine particulates in the Pearl River Delta region. The high level of ozone has promoted the formation of nitrogen dioxide in parts of the urban areas and at the roadside.

According to the Hong Kong Observatory, the weather in Hong Kong will still be fine with light winds in the next couple of days. It will be windier with a few showers early next week. It is expected that pollution levels will remain higher than normal until the wind speed strengthens.

With a health risk category in the "Very High" range or above, children, the elderly and persons with existing heart or respiratory illnesses are advised to reduce physical exertion and outdoor activities to a minimum or avoid such activities. The general public is advised to reduce, or reduce to a minimum, outdoor physical exertion, and to reduce time staying outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic. As health effects of air pollutants may vary for individuals, persons who are in doubt or experience discomfort should seek advice from health-care professionals. The public may visit the Centre for Health Protection's website ([www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/460/3557.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/460/3557.html)) for more information on the health effects of air pollution and relevant health advice.

The Education Bureau (EDB) urges all schools to visit the EDB's website for appropriate measures to safeguard students' health and take note of changes in the index. The relevant hyperlink is as follows:  
[www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-activities/sch-activities-guidelines/index.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-activities/sch-activities-guidelines/index.html).

When the AQHI is at the "Very High" level, employers of outdoor workers performing heavy manual work are advised to assess the risk of outdoor work and take appropriate preventive measures to protect the health of their employees, such as reducing outdoor physical exertion and the time of their stay outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic. At the "Serious" level, employers of all outdoor workers are advised to assess the risk of outdoor work and take appropriate preventive measures to protect the health of their employees.

Members of the public can check the current AQHI readings at the EPD's website ([www.aqhi.gov.hk/en.html](http://www.aqhi.gov.hk/en.html)) or by calling the hotline 2827 8541.

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## **SWD announces gradual resumption of aided child care centre services and special child care centre services**

In view of the latest pandemic situation and the Education Bureau's latest arrangements on the resumption of face-to-face classes, aided child care centre services and special child care centre services provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) will resume in phases, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said today (September 3). Details are as follows:

1. Aided child care centres providing day care services for children aged under 3 (including aided standalone child care centres and aided child care centres attached to kindergartens) will gradually resume normal services from September 29. Starting from mid-September, child care centres may, having regard to their circumstances (e.g. individual centres' operational modes and individual parents' needs), flexibly arrange for children to return to the centres to facilitate their adjustment. Service users may contact the respective centres for details of the arrangements.
2. Special child care centres will resume centre-based classroom training for upper classes from September 23 and for other classes from September 29. To minimise the risk of infection, classroom training will be conducted on a half-day basis.

Child care centres shall follow the guidelines issued by the Centre for Health Protection on infection control measures. To ensure that children are taken care of in a well-ventilated and safe environment, staff must wear masks, keep adequate social distancing, wash hands frequently, check body temperature as appropriate and more. The SWD will continue to provide child care centres with the latest guidelines on prevention of diseases.

The SWD will keep in view the developments of the pandemic and make further public announcements if necessary.

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## Man charged with murder

Police today (September 3) charged a 30-year-old man with one count of murder and two counts of assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

The man was arrested on September 1 in connection with a murder case happened in Tseung Kwan O in which a 34-year-old man died.

The case was mentioned at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts this morning.

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## MD announcement

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The Marine Department today (September 3) reminded masters, coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels navigating in Hong Kong waters to proceed at a safe speed and exercise extreme caution because restricted visibility of less than 2 nautical miles has been reported.

Appropriate sound signals shall be made when underway or at anchor. All vessels must comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collision at Sea.

Also, when radar is used without the benefit of adequate plotting facilities, the information obtained from the equipment is rather limited and should be construed accordingly.

Visibility reports are broadcast by the Vessel Traffic Centre (VTC) on VHF channels 02, 12, 14, 63 and 67.

In the event of an accident, a report shall be made immediately to the VTC at Tel: 2233 7801.

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## Illegal worker jailed

A Vietnamese illegal worker was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (September 2).

During an anti-illegal worker operation conducted on August 31, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a restaurant in Causeway Bay. A female Vietnamese illegal worker, aged 29, was arrested while working as a dish-washing worker. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was also arrested and investigation is ongoing.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. She pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. Meanwhile, she was also charged with one count of using a forged Hong Kong identity card and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases. Under the prevailing laws, it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers who are arrested during any operation, with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of

TIP elements, such as threats and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.