

Latest arrangements for Highways Department's public services

The Government has announced that the special work arrangements for government employees will be extended for one week until August 23. The Highways Department said today (August 13) that it will continue to provide essential and emergency public road repair services including daily inspections of expressways and emergency road repairs. It will also arrange for its contractors to continue to enhance the cleaning work for the handrails of footbridges, subways and escalators as well as the buttons of lifts under the department's purview.

The Reporting Centre of the Highways Department will maintain operation to handle road repair matters. For any suggestions, enquiries or complaints on the services, members of the public may continue to call the 24-hour hotline 2926 4111 or call 1823. Priority is given to emergency incidents. The public may also contact the Highways Department by email or by fax. Details are as follows:

Email addresses:

enquiry@hyd.gov.hk (for enquiries)

complaint@hyd.gov.hk (for complaints)

Fax numbers:

2714 5216 (for enquiries)

2187 2243 (for complaints)

Contractors fined for violation of safety legislation

Zhen Hua Engineering Company Limited, China Communications Construction Company Limited, CCCC Dredging (Group) Co, Ltd and City Mechanical Engineering Company Limited were fined \$65,000, \$65,000, \$65,000 and \$45,000 respectively at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today (August 13) for violation of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance and the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Safety Management) Regulation. The prosecutions were launched by the Labour Department.

The case involved a fatal accident that occurred on August 12, 2019, at a reclamation site of the Hong Kong International Airport Three Runway System project. A worker, while operating a bulldozer for earthmoving work, fell into the sea together with the bulldozer and died on the same day.

Man sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

A 27-year-old man was sentenced to immediate imprisonment for two weeks by the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (August 13) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) (the Regulation).

The man was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he left the place of quarantine without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer and was stopped by staff of the Immigration Department at Shenzhen Bay Control Point on March 24. He was charged with contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for two weeks.

Pursuant to the Regulation, starting from February 8, save for exempted persons, all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of their nationality or travel documents, will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E), starting from March 19, all persons arriving from countries or territories outside China would also be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching compulsory quarantine orders is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminds the public to comply with the Regulation. As of today, a total of 38 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to three months or fine of \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.

Special arrangements for ICAC services

to be further extended

The following press release is issued on behalf of the Independent Commission Against Corruption:

In view of the extension of government measures to reduce the flow of people and social contacts in order to stop the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the community, the ICAC today (August 13) announced that the current special arrangements of the Commission's services will be further extended until August 23.

During the period, except those who are required to provide essential and emergency public services, all other ICAC staff will continue to work from home.

Meanwhile, the ICAC's Report Centre and the report corruption hotline (2526 6366) will continue to operate round-the-clock to receive corruption complaints and enquiries. All other enquiry hotlines, including the Corruption Prevention Advisory Service hotline (2526 6363), Business Ethics Development Centre hotline (2826 3288), Clean Elections hotline (2920 7878) and the Integrity Building Management hotline (2929 4555) will also maintain their normal operation. All ICAC Regional Offices will be closed during the period.

The ICAC will closely monitor the epidemic situation and review the relevant arrangements whenever necessary.

Prepackaged bamboo fungi sample detected with excessive preservative and in breach of food labelling regulation

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (August 13) that a sample of prepackaged bamboo fungi was found to contain sulphur dioxide, a preservative, at a level exceeding the legal limit, and the functional class and name of the additive were not declared on the food label. Members of the public should not consume the affected batch of the product. The trade should also stop using or selling the affected batch of the product immediately if they possess it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: (Not available in English)

Place of origin: China

Packer: (Not available in English)

Net weight: 75.6 grams per pack

Best-before date: December 31, 2021

"The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample of bamboo fungi from a shop in Kowloon Bay for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained sulphur dioxide at a level of 3,690 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 500 ppm. The functional class and name of the additive were also not declared on the food label," a CFS spokesman said.

"The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularities and instructed it to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected batch of the product. The packer concerned has initiated a recall according to the CFS' instructions. Members of the public may call its hotline at 3188 3141 during office hours for enquiries about the recall. The CFS is also tracing the source of the affected product," the spokesman added.

Sulphur dioxide is a commonly used preservative in a variety of foods including dried vegetables, dried fruits, pickled vegetables and salted fish products. This preservative 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 this preservative may experience breathing difficulties, headache and nausea after consumption.

The spokesman reminded the food trade that the use of preservatives in food must comply with the Preservatives in Food Regulation (Cap 132BD). Furthermore, the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap 132W) require that for all prepackaged food for sale in Hong Kong containing sulphite in a concentration of 10 ppm or more, the functional class of the sulphite and its name shall be specified in the list of ingredients. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.