

CHP investigates three suspected food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 27) investigating three suspected food poisoning clusters affecting eight persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The first cluster comprised three women aged 25 to 54, who developed fever, abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhoea about seven to 13 hours after having dinner at a restaurant in Tsim Sha Tsui on March 23.

The second cluster comprised one man and one woman aged 30 to 40, who developed fever, abdominal pain and diarrhoea about 15 to 21 hours after having dinner at the same restaurant on the same day.

The third cluster comprised two males and one female aged nine to 40, who developed fever, abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhoea about 10 to 25 hours after having a meal at the same restaurant on the same night.

All affected persons have sought medical advice and three of them required hospitalisation. All patients 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 eating 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.
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News story: Skills Minister calls on employers to join new T level panels

Leading businesses are being urged to grasp the opportunity of working with the government to develop prestigious new T level qualifications.

Skills Minister Anne Milton has called on industry experts from agriculture, environmental and animal care; business and administration; hair and beauty; creative and design; and catering and hospitality to join the influential T level employer panels and help develop the outline content for new qualifications.

T levels are new courses, which will be on a par with A levels and provide young people with a genuine choice between technical and academic education post 16. The first subjects in digital, education and childcare, and construction will be taught from 2020.

Skills Minister, Anne Milton said:

T levels are about giving greater choice to young people to get the skills they need to achieve good jobs. It is also about businesses – we know they are crying out for a skilled workforce and T levels will create the next generation of talented employees for them.

We are already working with top industry leaders and want even more to join us to make this a success for individuals, businesses and the economy.

T level content is already being developed with the help of top firms like Rolls-Royce, IBM, Lloyds and Morphy Richards, among others.

The Department for Education wants business representatives to step-up and help design the new qualifications in T level routes which will be delivered from 2022:

- agriculture, environmental and animal care
- business and administration
- hair and beauty
- creative and design
- catering and hospitality

Businesses can [apply](#) to be part of the T level qualification panels. The closing date for applications is 5pm Tuesday 8 May 2018.

Cluster of Multi-drug Resistant Acinetobacter cases in Queen Elizabeth Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Queen Elizabeth Hospital made the following announcement today (March 27):

Three patients (aged 48 to 67) of a male Neurosurgery ward have been confirmed as having Multi-drug Resistant Acinetobacter (MDRA) since March 12. They are currently under isolation. One of them is in stable condition. The remaining two are in serious condition due to underlying diseases.

Infection control measures in the ward concerned have already been stepped up according to prevailing guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close medical surveillance.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection.

SRPA promotes Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Ordinance to estate agents (with photos)

The Sales of First-hand Residential Properties Authority (SRPA) today launched a new promotional initiative to brief estate agents on requirements of the Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Ordinance.

SRPA officers visited 18 estate agency companies in Aberdeen and Tseung Kwan O this morning, reminding estate agents on issues they should pay attention to when promoting first-hand residential properties, in particular requirements of the Ordinance in relation to advertisements and prohibitions against misrepresentation and the dissemination of false or misleading information.

Information kits, comprising a summary that sets out how estate agents should comply with the requirements of the Ordinance when publishing advertisements on first-hand residential properties, a pamphlet on the main requirements of the Ordinance and "Notes to Purchasers of First-hand Residential Properties" setting out information of interest to prospective purchasers of first-hand residential properties, were distributed to the

estate agents.

“In most circumstances, estate agents are the first contact point of prospective purchasers. As such, estate agents’ understanding of and compliance with the Ordinance are of paramount importance in the course of sale of first-hand residential properties,” an SRPA spokesman said.

“With a view to enhancing protection for prospective purchasers, the SRPA will continue to foster awareness of estate agents on requirements of the Ordinance as a targeted measure,” the spokesman added.

In parallel, the SRPA will also step up inspections of estate agency companies to check whether advertisements on first-hand residential properties comply with the requirements in the Ordinance so as to further enhance the transparency and fairness of the sales of first-hand residential properties and protect the interests of purchasers.



Essex engineer sentenced for unregistered gas work

A worker has been sentenced after breaching a prohibition notice for gas work and for leaving gas appliances in a dangerous state.

Chelmsford Magistrates’ Court heard that in July 2015 Gary Miller disconnected and removed a boiler from a domestic property in Brentwood, and installed a replacement with associated pipework.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Miller had previously been issued with a prohibition notice for undertaking unregistered gas work in 2013, and had not since gained a registration. The gas work carried out by Mr Miller was inspected by a Gas Safe inspector who found it to be “at risk” meaning that the appliance, if operated, may have been a potential danger to life or property. Mr Miller had intended for a

registered engineer to sign off the work, once he had installed the gas appliance, which is also not permissible under the regulations.

Gary Miller, of Fairfield Road, Ongar, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(3) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, and Section 22 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. He has been sentenced to a 12-month Community Order with 100 hours of unpaid work.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Adam Hills said: "Gary Miller undertook gas work when he knew he was not registered to do so. HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate action against rogue gas fitters who disregard the law and place lives at risk. Working with gas appliances is difficult, specialised and potentially very dangerous, so it is vital that this is only undertaken by trained and competent engineers who are registered with Gas Safe."

Jonathan Samuel, chief executive of Gas Safe Register, added: "Every Gas Safe registered engineer carries a Gas Safe ID card, which shows who they are and the type of gas appliances they are qualified to work on. We always encourage the public to ask for and check the card, and if they have any concerns about the safety of work carried out in their home, to speak to us."

For more information about gas safety visit
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/index.htm>

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.