

Hung Hom and To Kwa Wan markets to suspend operation for two days pending for environmental swabs test results (with photo)

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (August 4) announced that in view of recent cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) found to be related to Hung Hom Market and To Kwa Wan Market, for prudence's sake, the two markets will suspend operation for two days from August 5 to 6, pending for test results of the environmental swabs taken at the markets during inspection. The FEHD will thoroughly clean and disinfect the two markets during the suspension period to assure market stall tenants and the public that their health and safety are being safeguarded.

The Government today invited the Chair Professor of the Department of Microbiology, the University of Hong Kong, Professor Yuen Kwok-yung, to go to Hung Hom Market and To Kwa Wan Market to carry out inspection and offer advice on anti-epidemic measures. Environmental swabs were taken at the two markets for testing. As the testing work takes time to complete, for prudence's sake, the two markets will suspend operation for two days pending for the test results.

The FEHD attaches importance to the hygiene conditions of public markets. In view of the developments of the epidemic, the FEHD has continued to enhance anti-epidemic measures and carry out cleaning and disinfection work in its markets. In addition to regular cleaning work in the daytime, market service contractors also conduct thorough cleaning in all markets after the markets are closed every day. Over the past few weeks, some 20 markets in various districts have been arranged to close an hour earlier progressively for additional deep cleaning and disinfection as a precautionary measure.

Moreover, since late July, the FEHD has progressively arranged a voluntary one-off free COVID-19 testing service for staff of market stalls and personnel working in markets. No online registration is required. The FEHD is in close liaison with the Centre for Health Protection and has been distributing specimen bottles to markets with confirmed cases involving operators of market stalls or personnel working therein since the implementation of the scheme. The testing agency had distributed specimen bottles to operators of market stalls or personnel working in Hung Hom Market and To Kwa Wan Market on July 31 and August 1 respectively, and will strive to complete the testing work as soon as possible.

A spokesman for the FEHD strongly appealed to market stall tenants to actively participate in the testing scheme, continue to comply with the Government's regulation to wear masks in markets, and maintain personal and

environmental hygiene continuously. The FEHD will continue to closely monitor the situation of each market, and will strive to enhance anti-epidemic measures for its markets, as well as to conduct deep cleaning and disinfection work in other markets if necessary continuously so as to maintain environmental hygiene.

