

Red tides sighted

Four red tides have been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (May 8).

The first red tide was spotted by a member of the public on May 2 at West Lamma Channel, including Lo Tik Wan and Sok Kwu Wan fish culture zones. The second red tide was spotted by staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at Golden Beach, Tuen Mun, on May 3.

In addition, staff of the Marine Department and the Environmental Protection Department spotted red tides at Victoria Harbour near China Ferry Terminal and Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on May 4 and 5 respectively.

All four red tides have dissipated and no associated fish deaths have been reported so far.

A spokesman for the working group said, "All four red tides were formed by *Heterosigma akashiwo*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters. According to overseas literature, *Heterosigma akashiwo* might produce neurotoxins and kill fish by damaging their gills."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at the Ma Wan, Cheung Sha Wan, Lo Tik Wan and Sok Kwu Wan fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue to monitor red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.