

Red tides sighted

Ten red tides have been sighted over the past week, the Inter-departmental Red Tide Working Group reported today (April 26).

On April 21, staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) spotted the first red tide at Silverstrand Beach, Sai Kung. On April 24, LCSD staff spotted five red tides at South Bay Beach, Turtle Cove Beach, Shek O Beach, Repulse Bay Beach and Deep Water Bay Beach on Hong Kong Island respectively. On the same day, staff of the Marine Department spotted two red tides at Stanley Bay and Repulse Bay respectively. Members of the public also spotted two red tides at eastern waters of Hong Kong (near Wang Chau and Basalt Island) and Clear Water Bay to Joss House Bay respectively.

The red tides at South Bay Beach, Repulse Bay Beach, Stanley Bay, Repulse Bay and Clear Water Bay to Joss House Bay still persist, while the other five red tides have dissipated. No associated fish deaths have been reported as of today.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The above red tides were formed by *Noctiluca scintillans*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters and is non-toxic."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at Ma Nam Wat, Kau Sai, Kai Lung Wan, Tai Tau Chau, Leung Shuen Wan, Tiu Cham Wan, Po Toi O, Lo Tik Wan, Sok Kwu Wan, Po Toi and Tung Lung Chau 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.