

Labour Department highly concerned about fatal work accident that happened today

The Labour Department (LD) is highly concerned about a work accident that happened at a construction site in Tseung Kwan O this morning (March 31), in which a male worker was hit by a metal strut being suspended by a crane while working on the site. He sustained injury and was certified dead later in the hospital. The LD is saddened by the death of the worker and expresses its deepest sympathies to the victim's family.

The LD's spokesman said, "We commenced an immediate on-site investigation as soon as we were notified of the accident and issued suspension notices to the contractors concerned, suspending the metal struts installation work. The contractors cannot resume the work process until the LD is satisfied that measures to abate the relevant risk have been taken."

The spokesman added, "We will complete investigation as soon as possible to identify the cause of the accident, ascertain the liability of the duty holders and recommend improvement measures. We will take actions pursuant to the law if there is any violation of the work safety legislation."

The general duty provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance require employers to provide safe working environments, plant and safe systems of work for their employees. Those who contravene the above provisions are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for six months.

In regard to today's accident, the LD will issue a Work Safety Alert through its website and email, giving a brief account of the accident concerned to duty holders, workers' unions, professional bodies of safety practitioners and others, reminding the industry of the importance of following safety precautionary measures to prevent a recurrence of similar accidents.

The LD will also remind the employer concerned of the liability for employees' compensation under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, assist family members of the deceased to claim employees' compensation and closely follow up on the case. For those with financial difficulties, the LD will assist them to apply for appropriate emergency funds. Subject to the needs and wishes of family members of the deceased, the LD will also liaise with the Social Welfare Department for financial or other assistance.

For the sake of securing the safety and health of employees at work, the LD appeals to employers to provide plant and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health. Employees should co-operate with their

employers, adopt all safety measures and use personal protective equipment provided properly to avoid endangering their own work safety and that of other workers.

CHP investigates case of Legionnaires' disease in hospital

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 31) investigating a case of Legionnaires' disease (LD) in Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, and that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

The male patient, aged 65 with underlying illness, developed seizure and decreased general condition on March 28 and was admitted to TMH on the same day. He was transferred to the Intensive Care Unit on the next day for further management. His clinical diagnosis was pneumonia and status epilepticus. He is currently in critical condition.

His tracheal aspirate was tested positive for Legionella species upon laboratory testing.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no travel history in the incubation period. He had been admitted to TMH for management of underlying illness on March 9 and was discharged on March 27.

"Epidemiological investigations with TMH are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any. Relevant water samples and environmental swabs have been collected from potential sources for laboratory testing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Tracing of contacts including staff and in-patients in ward is ongoing and those identified have been put under medical surveillance. The CHP has provided health advice against LD to staff and in-patients, including those with weakened immunity who should use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing. Investigation is ongoing.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus which support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh-water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres (μm) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2 μm filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
 1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
 2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
 3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
 4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
 5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

CE visits Po Leung Kuk to learn about anti-epidemic support services (with photos/video)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, went to the headquarters of Po Leung Kuk (PLK) in Causeway Bay this afternoon (March 31) to visit its mobile Chinese medicine clinic and learn about its support services for the underprivileged during the epidemic.

Accompanied by the Chairman of the Board of Directors of PLK, Mr Ma Ching-nam, and the designated Chairman, Ms Daisy Ho, Mrs Lam visited PLK's mobile Chinese medicine clinic. She noted that there are a total of four mobile Chinese medicine clinics providing free medical services in about 20 districts across the territory during the epidemic. This is expected to benefit about 6 000 people. Welcoming the free Chinese medicine service, Mrs Lam thanked PLK for supporting the fight against the disease in various aspects, including loaning the PLK Jockey Club Pak Tam Chung Holiday Camp to the Government and distributing anti-epidemic packs to grassroots people.

Mrs Lam said that many people are facing hardship amid the severe epidemic situation and that the Government will provide full support to them. She also urged the public to stand united, support each other and care more about the underprivileged sectors of the community during this period in order to overcome the epidemic together.





Government responds to media enquiries on Retail Sector Subsidy Scheme

In response to media enquiries on the requirement on the nature of business stated in the business registration certificate for the purpose of the Retail Sector Subsidy Scheme (the Scheme) under the Anti-epidemic Fund, the Government today (March 31) gave the following reply:

The Government launched the Scheme under the Anti-epidemic Fund to provide relief to retailers hard hit by the coronavirus epidemic. The Scheme requires that applicants should be conducting a substantial and substantive retail business and that their business should have commenced before January 1 this year. As at 6pm today, nearly 60 000 applications have been received under the Scheme.

During the vetting process, the Government will examine the business registration certificates and other supporting documents submitted by the applicants, such as a recent photograph of the shop front, a Mandatory Provident Fund contributions statement, a rental receipt and a water or electricity bill to consider whether an application is eligible in a holistic manner having regard to the circumstances of individual cases. The Government will not make a decision solely on the basis of the nature of business as stated in the business registration certificate.

In addition, the Government will verify the business registration information submitted by the applicants with the administrative records from the Business Registration Office. If the relevant business registration information was revised recently, the Government may request the applicants to submit additional information and documents to facilitate consideration of the application. The Government cautions that if any person has purposely provided false or misleading information with an intention to obtain the subsidy, the case may be referred to law enforcement agencies for investigation and follow-up.

For enquiries concerning details and application procedure of the Scheme, applicants can call the telephone hotline (1836 111) or email to enquiry@retailsubsidy.hk. The deadline for application submission is April 12.

Fraudulent website related to China CITIC Bank International Limited

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by China CITIC Bank International Limited on fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on [the HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.