

Update on dengue fever

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (November 15) reported the latest number of dengue fever (DF) cases, and strongly urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From November 8 to 14, the CHP recorded five imported DF cases. The patients had respectively been to Guangdong in Mainland China (two cases), Malaysia (two cases) and French Polynesia (one case) during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (November 14), 186 cases had been recorded this year (including 185 imported cases and one local case), as compared with 145 cases recorded in the same period last year. The imported cases were mainly from Thailand (32), Malaysia (27) and the Philippines (24).

The CHP has been closely monitoring the latest DF situation in neighbouring and overseas areas. DF is endemic in many tropical and subtropical areas of the world. According to the World Health Organization, some Asian countries are experiencing unusually high numbers of DF cases this year. The numbers of cases in several countries including Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam were much higher than the numbers for the same period in 2018.

According to the French Polynesia health authority, a DF outbreak in the French Polynesian islands has been ongoing since April 2019. As of November 3, more than 2 000 cases had been recorded this year, with most of them reported from Tahiti.

Separately, according to the Health Commission of Guangdong Province, as of October 31, 5 315 cases had been recorded in Guangdong this year, which was significantly higher than that in the same period last year (2 752 cases). The numbers of cases recorded in August, September and October were 1 209, 1 430 and 1 880 respectively. In Taiwan, as of yesterday, 577 cases (including 100 local cases) had been recorded in 2019.

Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas this year has been uploaded to the CHP's website

(www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df_imported_cases_and_overseas_figures_eng.pdf).

Members of the public should stay vigilant and carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures.

â€œApart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from areas affected by DF should apply insect repellent for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

[Grading of beach water quality released](#)

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (November 15) released the latest grading of water quality for eight gazetted beaches that are open for swimming. Other beaches have been closed to swimmers since November 1 for the winter season.

Seven beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1) and one as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Big Wave Bay Beach	Repulse Bay Beach
Clear Water Bay Second Beach	Silver Mine Bay Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach	Stanley Main Beach
Golden Beach	

Grade 2 beach is:

Silverstrand Beach

Compared with the grading released last week, Silver Mine Bay Beach has been upgraded from Grade 2 to Grade 1.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, an EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a storm or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the department's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

[November 2019 issue of "Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics" now available](#)

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) published today (November

15) the November 2019 issue of the "Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics" (HKMDS).

Apart from providing up-to-date statistics, this issue also contains three feature articles entitled "Consumer Price Index Analysed by Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose", "The Mortality Trend in Hong Kong, 1986 to 2018" and "Sports and Related Activities in Hong Kong".

"Consumer Price Index Analysed by Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose"

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the changes over time in the price level of consumer commodities and services generally purchased by households.

Apart from the overall index, which is widely used as an indicator of the inflation affecting consumers, further breakdowns of the CPI by commodity/service group are also released to facilitate more in-depth analyses on consumer inflation. When analysing the CPIs, Hong Kong has all along adopted a classification system which has evolved over time to meet user needs and local situation.

Starting in 2000s, some economies have started to adopt the Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP) developed by the United Nations in analysing the CPI. In view of this, C&SD also compiles the CPI based on the COICOP to facilitate international comparison.

This feature article gives a brief introduction of the COICOP and analyses the 2014/15-based CPIs by COICOP.

For enquiries about this feature article, please contact the Consumer Price Index Section, C&SD (Tel: 3903 7370; email: cpi@censtatd.gov.hk).

"The Mortality Trend in Hong Kong, 1986 to 2018"

Mortality trend is often used as one of the indicators for assessing the state of health of the population. Analysis of age-sex mortality rates and causes of death can also facilitate planning of healthcare services.

In Hong Kong, the age-sex specific mortality rates for both genders and all age groups have been decreasing continuously, reflecting that residents of Hong Kong tend to live longer along with advancement in healthcare services. Yet, because of population ageing, the overall mortality rates and the number of deaths showed an increasing trend.

This feature article gives a brief account of the mortality trend in Hong Kong over the period from 1986 to 2018. It also discusses the leading causes of death, the expectation of life and the seasonality of deaths.

For enquiries about this feature article, please contact the Demographic Statistics Section, C&SD (Tel: 3903 6933; email: population@censtatd.gov.hk).

"Sports and Related Activities in Hong Kong"

The Government has been consistently promoting the development of sports through a three-pronged approach, namely to promote sports in the community, to support elite sports and to develop Hong Kong into a centre for major international sports events. This feature article analyses the statistics of Hong Kong's economic contribution of sports and related activities for 2016 and 2017. The statistics are released for the first time.

For enquiries about this feature article, please contact the National Income Branch, C&SD (Tel: 3903 7002; email: gdp-p@censtatd.gov.hk).

Published in bilingual form, the HKMDS is a compact volume of official statistics containing about 140 tables. It collects up-to-date statistical series on various aspects of the social and economic situation of Hong Kong. Topics include population; labour; external trade; National Income and Balance of Payments; prices; business performance; energy; housing and property; government accounts, finance and insurance; and transport, communications and tourism. For selected key statistical items, over 20 charts depicting the annual trend in the past decade and quarterly or monthly trend in the recent two years are also available. Users can download the Digest free of charge at the website of C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp460.jsp?productCode=B1010002).

Enquiries about the contents of the Digest can be directed to the Statistical Information Dissemination Section of C&SD (Tel: 2582 4738; email: gen-enquiry@censtatd.gov.hk).

[Anti-rodent work continues to be stepped up \(with photo\)](#)

The interdepartmental Pest Control Steering Committee met today (November 15) to review the effectiveness of the work under the territory-wide cleaning operation since May 20. To sustain the effectiveness of anti-rodent work, various departments agreed to strengthen the relevant work until February next year. Meanwhile, owing to the first confirmed local dengue fever case recorded this year in early November, the departments also discussed areas to be strengthened when carrying out anti-mosquito work next year.

Various departments briefed the meeting on the progress of anti-rodent work in all 18 districts.

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has collected 11 617 dead rodents, caught 9 349 live rodents and filled 5 102 rat holes from May 20 to November 10. The FEHD has stepped up rodent control work in various

districts. In comparison with the figure in May, the number of live rodents caught in October has increased by 27 per cent and the number of complaints received has dropped by 48 per cent. Between January and October this year, the FEHD caught 19 106 live rodents and filled 10 831 rat holes, whereas in the same period last year, 13 264 live rodents were caught and 7 698 rat holes were filled, representing an increase of around 40 per cent.

The FEHD conducted a special operation targeted at irregularities of food premises such as food preparation, scullery, improper storage of articles and illegal disposal of refuse in back alleys. Between May 20 and November 10, a total of 552 summonses, 801 Fixed Penalty Notices, 1 059 Notices to Remove Litter/Waste and to Clean Areas, 3 100 advisory letters, 1 778 verbal warnings, 13 warning letters and five Nuisance Notices were issued. The FEHD issued some 4 900 summonses targeted at illegal activities by food premises between January and August this year, more than some 4 100 summonses issued in the same period last year. The prosecution figures this year are expected to increase by 20 per cent compared with those of last year.

The FEHD has conducted a three-month intensive anti-rodent operation in Lei Wan Market, Ap Lei Chau Market and Kam Tin Market since mid-July. Speedy refuse removal and cleaning of all drains in the markets have been carried out every night after the stalls are closed to eliminate rodents' food sources. Traps have also been placed extensively. The department is now concluding its experience and will adjust future operations in view of the ground situation.

The Highways Department has completed 240 improvement work items of different scales in various back alleys, including repairing road surfaces or surface channels as well as local repaving.

The Housing Authority (HA) has conducted cleaning operations to strengthen cleaning and pest control work in public rental housing (PRH) estates since June. The operation will last until late November. The HA has already completed examination and reinforcement of rodent-proofing structures installed in more than 180 PRH estates in October. These works included installation of 6 500 additional rodent guards at suitable locations of external walls and pipes of buildings in the PRH estates with reference to suggestions from the FEHD.

The Buildings Department and the Architectural Services Department have promulgated guidelines on incorporating rodent-proofing design in new private buildings for building professionals' reference. The FEHD held a seminar in November to facilitate better understanding of the guidelines by building professionals.

In addition, the FEHD held 202 health talks for personnel of private property management companies and persons-in-charge of food premises. Eight talks on pest control were also held for government cleaning service contractors and staff of private property management companies.

In terms of the focus of anti-rodent work ahead, the Highways Department will locally repave back alleys with poor environmental hygiene conditions taking into account the community's feedback. It is initially estimated to involve more than 30 back alleys. The HA will review and further decide on the priority PRH estates with reference to the estate situation, and will also continue to review and reinforce rodent-proofing facilities, if needed, in PRH estates. Currently, the HA has implemented additional measures in 50 priority PRH estates to step up cleaning and pest control work as well as to strengthen implementation of the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement. The FEHD will learn from its past experience and adjust future operations depending on the ground situation. The department will carry out intensive rodent control operations in three additional public markets, and will also continue to strengthen enforcement actions.

The FEHD has been putting on trial thermal and night-vision cameras with artificial intelligence functionality to monitor the extent of rodent activity since April. The department will continue to examine the feasibility of using these cameras for rodent surveillance. It is planned to use the relevant technology on trial for assessing the effectiveness of anti-rodent work when carrying out anti-rodent operations in designated target areas next year. The FEHD invited a British expert, by recommendation of the World Health Organization, to Hong Kong in November to inspect rodent control work. The Government will make reference to the advice provided by the expert and continue to make reference to overseas experience on anti-rodent work.

Regarding anti-mosquito work, in view of the success of the territory-wide All-out Anti-mosquito Operations this year, various departments agreed to continue this year's modus operandi, eliminate breeding grounds early and commence fogging operations simultaneously before the onset of the rainy season next year. Various departments also reviewed the pest control work items which needed to be strengthened next year. These include constant updating of black spots for carrying out fogging operations to facilitate deployment and clearance of mosquito breeding places in rainy seasons.

In respect of mosquito control techniques, departments and organisations including the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Housing Department and the Department of Health as well as the Hospital Authority have conducted field trials of a new mosquito trap design in Ma On Shan and Sheung Shui since September. The trap has been effective by using female mosquitoes as the media, while an insect growth regulator will be disseminated to different water bodies to prevent mosquito larvae from hatching into adults.

Before the onset of the rainy season next year, the Government will put in place a sufficient quantity of new mosquito traps in suitable locations as needed to strengthen mosquito control work. Moreover, the FEHD will continue to put on trial ovitraps with modified design to calculate the density of adult *Aedes albopictus* directly. Next year, the department will adopt the new design territory-wide and provide the public with the data on adult mosquito density. ¶¶¶¶¶

Representatives from three bureaux and 20 departments/organisations attended today's meeting.



[FHB expresses sorrow and outrage over death of cleaning worker](#)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, expressed profound sorrow and outrage over the passing of an outsourced cleaning service contractor worker who was suspected to have been hit in the head by a hard object hurled by rioters in the North District earlier.

The senior worker was an outsourced worker of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). He was suspected to have been hit in the head by a hard object hurled by rioters during his lunch break near the North District Town Hall on November 13 (Wednesday), and subsequently passed away at the Prince of Wales Hospital yesterday (November 14) night.

Professor Chan said, "I am deeply saddened by the incident, and extend my deepest condolences to the family members of the deceased worker. The FEHD has requested the service contractor to follow up the labour insurance and compensation matters promptly. I have also instructed the department to continue to maintain close contact with the deceased's family and provide all appropriate support and assistance to them as far as practicable. With the consent of the family of the deceased, the FEHD has referred the case to the Social Welfare Department for follow-up.

"I express outrage over the hurling of hard objects by rioters that led to the death of the senior worker. The Police have now re-classified the case as murder. I believe that the Police will investigate the case thoroughly to bring the offenders to justice.

"I appeal again to members of the public to stay calm and rational but not to take part in any violent or illegal acts."