

Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 10) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, and that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From December 2 to 8, two community-acquired LD cases were reported. They are:

1. A male patient, aged 79 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Chung Hing Mansion, 981A-981F King's Road and 1-13A Pan Hoi Street, Quarry Bay; and
2. A male patient, aged 59 with good past health, who lives in Block East, Miramar Villa, 2B Shiu Fai Terrace, Wan Chai.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of December 8, 102 LD cases had been reported in 2018. In 2017 and 2016, there were 72 and 75 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems leading to stagnant water; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

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 get 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 the 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.

EMSD announces test results of LPG quality in November 2018

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (December 10) announced that the department collected eight liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) samples from auto-LPG filling stations and LPG terminals on a random basis in November 2018 for laboratory tests. The results showed that the LPG quality of all these samples complied with auto-LPG specifications.

The detailed test results are available on the EMSD's website (www.emsd.gov.hk/emsd/eng/sgi/lpg_smpl_analysis.shtml). Enquiries can also be made to the EMSD's hotline on 2333 3762.

In addition, the EMSD has been vetting independent third-party test reports submitted by LPG supply companies for each shipment to ensure that the quality of imported LPG complies with the specified requirements.

Phishing email related to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation 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 The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited on phishing email, 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 email concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the email 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.

SCOLAR invites proposals

The following is issued on behalf of the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research:

The Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) is inviting eligible local organisations/institutions to submit proposals for one or more of the following projects. All of the projects are supported by the Language Fund.

(1) Promotion of Chinese 2019/20 and 2020/21

Locally registered organisations are invited to organise innovative and educational activities to arouse local primary and secondary students' interest in reading and writing in Chinese and enhance their proficiency in writing through extensive reading.

(2) Promotion of Putonghua 2019/20 and 2020/21

Locally registered organisations are invited to organise innovative and educational activities with a view to enriching the language learning environment and enhancing the Putonghua proficiency of students and the general public.

(3) Programmes on Supporting Non-Chinese Speakers in Learning Chinese for 2019/20 and 2020/21 (eligible local organisations may submit proposals for one or more items)

- District-based Project on Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) Children in Learning Chinese

Local non-profit-making organisations are invited to organise fun and educational programmes on the theme of "Learning Chinese in a Fun and Leisurely Way" to support NCS children in learning the Chinese language.

- Vocational Chinese Language Programme for NCS School Leavers

Local post-secondary, educational or training organisations are invited to develop and operate vocational Chinese language courses pegged at Level 1 or 2 of the Qualifications Framework for NCS school leavers. These courses should aim at building participants' competence and confidence in using Chinese, thus enhancing their employability.

- Project for Developing and Promoting Chinese Learning and Teaching Materials for Non-Chinese Speakers in Hong Kong

Local educational, research, publishing and training organisations are invited to develop and/or promote learning and teaching materials to enhance

the effectiveness in teaching Chinese to non-Chinese speakers and to provide them with self-learning tools in learning Chinese.

(4) Sponsorship Projects 2019/20

Locally registered organisations are invited to organise language-related event- or competition-based projects in the community, thereby enriching the language environment of Hong Kong.

Organisations/institutions interested in submitting proposals are requested to send them to SCOLAR by noon on January 21, 2019.

Details are available at the SCOLAR webpage: www.language-education.com.

Postal services to Réunion return to normal

Hongkong Post announced today (December 10) that, as advised by the postal administration of France, postal services to Réunion have returned to normal.