

CE meets Governor of Qinghai Province (with photo)

The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, met the Governor of Qinghai Province, Mr Wu Xiaojun, today (September 9) to exchange views on deepening exchanges and co-operation between Hong Kong and Qinghai. The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, also attended the meeting.

Mr Lee welcomed Mr Wu's visit to Hong Kong with his delegation. Mr Lee said that Qinghai is a major green resources province with abundant natural assets. Qinghai is actively promoting the development of various industries, while Hong Kong enjoys the unparalleled advantages of having the strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world under "one country, two systems". Mr Lee added that there is ample room for collaboration between the two places in different aspects.

He pointed out that Hong Kong, with its pool of top-notch international scientific research talent and strong capabilities in basic scientific research, can complement Qinghai's strengths, particularly in accelerating transformation of research and development outcomes, such as building a world-class salt lake industry base and a national highland for the clean energy industry. Qinghai enterprises can leverage Hong Kong's role as an international trade centre to explore markets and enhance Qinghai's position as a supplier of green organic agricultural and livestock products.

Mr Lee said that Xining in Qinghai Province has become one of the applicable cities of the Individual Visit Scheme since May this year, while direct flights between Xining and Hong Kong were also resumed in July, facilitating the flow of people between the two places. He highlighted that Qinghai can utilise Hong Kong as a platform to promote its rich and vivid cultural and tourism resources, developing itself into an international ecotourism destination and bringing new impetus for co-operation between Qinghai and Hong Kong. Mr Lee welcomes Qinghai tourists to visit Hong Kong to experience in person the city's unique charm as a metropolis where East meets West, with a view to further promoting cultural exchanges between the two places.



[Hospital Authority makes statement on labour dispute involving subcontractor of United Christian Hospital expansion project and construction sector imported labour](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesman for the Hospital Authority (HA) made the following statement today (September 9) regarding a labour dispute involving a subcontractor of the United Christian Hospital (UCH) expansion project and construction sector imported labour:

The HA today is aware of a labour dispute involving a subcontractor of the main contractor undertaking the UCH expansion project and construction sector imported labour. The HA is highly concerned about the incident and has instructed the main contractor to properly manage the dispute with its subcontractor, and to ensure that its subcontractor resolves the dispute in accordance with the contract terms as soon as possible so as to protect the interests of the concerned workers. The main contractor has reported to and will maintain close contact with the Labour Department to follow up on the incident.

The HA has also requested the main contractor to conduct a thorough investigation and submit a report as soon as possible, and to ascertain that the UCH expansion project is unaffected by the incident.

10 landlords of subdivided units under regulated tenancies convicted of contravening relevant statutory requirements

Ten landlords of subdivided units (SDUs), who contravened Part IVA of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance (Cap. 7), pleaded guilty and were fined a total of \$21,000 today (September 9) at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts. Since the Ordinance came into force, the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) has successfully prosecuted 381 cases involving a total of 329 SDU landlords, with fines ranging from \$400 to \$34,800, amounting to a total of \$777,410.

The offences of these landlords include (1) failing to submit a Notice of Tenancy (Form AR2) to the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation within 60 days after the term of the regulated tenancy commenced; (2) failing to produce copies of the bills and provide an account in writing when requiring the tenant to pay for the reimbursement of the apportioned water and/or electricity charges; (3) failing to provide the tenant with a rent receipt; and (4) requesting the tenant to pay money other than the types permitted under the Ordinance. One of the landlords committed five offences under (1) to (3) and was fined \$3,800.

The RVD earlier discovered that the landlords failed to comply with the relevant requirements under the Ordinance. Upon an in-depth investigation and evidence collection, the RVD prosecuted against the landlords.

A spokesman for the RVD reiterated that SDU landlords must comply with the relevant requirements under the Ordinance, and also reminded SDU tenants of their rights under the Ordinance. He also stressed that the RVD will continue to take resolute enforcement action against any contraventions of the Ordinance. Apart from following up on reported cases, the RVD has been adopting a multipronged approach to proactively identify, investigate and follow up on cases concerning landlords who are suspected of contravening the Ordinance. In particular, the RVD has been requiring landlords of regulated tenancies to provide information and reference documents of their tenancies for checking whether the landlords concerned have complied with the requirements of the Ordinance. If a landlord, without reasonable excuse, refuses to provide the relevant information or neglects the RVD's request, the landlord commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine at level 3 (\$10,000) and to imprisonment for three months. Depending on the actual circumstances, and having regard to the information and evidence collected, the RVD will take appropriate actions on individual cases, including instigating prosecution against suspected contraventions of the Ordinance.

To help curb illegal acts as soon as possible, members of the public

should report to the RVD promptly any suspected cases of contravening the relevant requirements. Reporting can be made through the telephone hotline (2150 8303), by email (enquiries@rvd.gov.hk), by fax (2116 4920), by post (15/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon), or in person (visiting the Tenancy Services Section office of the RVD at Room 3816-22, 38/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong, and please call 2150 8303 to make an appointment). Furthermore, the RVD has provided a form (Form AR4) (www.rvd.gov.hk/doc/en/forms/ar4.pdf) on its website to facilitate SDU tenants' reporting to the RVD.

The RVD reminds that pursuant to the Ordinance, a regulated cycle of regulated tenancies is to comprise two consecutive regulated tenancies (i.e. the first-term tenancy and second-term tenancy) for an SDU, and the term of each regulated tenancy is two years. A tenant of a first-term tenancy for an SDU is entitled to be granted a second-term tenancy of the regulated cycle, thus enjoying a total of four years of security of tenure. Since the first batch of regulated tenancies has already approached their second-term tenancies, the RVD has started a new round of publicity and education work in order to assist SDU landlords and tenants to understand the important matters pertaining to the second-term tenancy, and procedures that need to be followed about two months prior to the commencement of the purported second-term tenancy. In addition, the RVD has started issuing letters enclosing relevant information to the concerned landlords and tenants of regulated tenancies in batches, according to the expiry time of their first-term tenancies, to remind them about their respective obligations and rights under the Ordinance. These landlords and tenants may also visit the dedicated page for the second-term tenancy on the RVD's website (www.rvd.gov.hk/en/tenancy_matters/second_term_tenancy.html) for the relevant information, including a concise guide, brochures, tutorial videos and frequently asked questions. SDU landlords and tenants are also advised to familiarise themselves with the relevant statutory requirements and maintain close communication regarding the second-term tenancy for handling the matters properly and in a timely manner according to the Ordinance.

For enquiries related to regulated tenancies, please call the telephone hotline (2150 8303) or visit the RVD's webpage (www.rvd.gov.hk/en/our_services/part_iva.html) for the relevant information.

Open auctions for public market stalls to be held in September

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) announced today (September 9) that open auctions for a total of 290 stalls in 36 public markets will be held in September.

The retail commodities allowed for sale in these stalls cover cooked food, frozen meat, fresh meat, fish, fruits, vegetables, ready-to-eat food, food-related dry goods and wet goods, non-food related dry goods and wet goods, service trades (including barber (haircutting only), manicures, beauty and Chinese medicine practitioners), siu mei and lo mei, mobile phone/mobile phone accessories/electronic products/electronic parts, pet goods and pet food, houseware, hardware/locksmith, etc. The tenancy agreement is a three-year fixed term from November 1, with no right of renewal upon expiry of the tenancy agreement. The upset prices of the monthly rent of the stalls vary depending on the sizes, locations and vacancy periods of the individual stalls. The upset prices for the stalls in an open auction will be initially fixed at 80 per cent of the open market rent (OMR) if the stalls have been vacant for over six months, and at 60 per cent of the OMR if the vacant period has been over eight months. Relevant information is available on the FEHD website.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "Bidders for the market stalls must be at least 18 years old and ordinarily reside in Hong Kong. To allow more people to bid for the stalls and increase customer choices by enhancing the diversity in terms of the variety of stalls, there will be a restriction on the number of stalls to be rented in the same market by a single tenant. Any person who is currently a stall tenant is not allowed to bid in the first round of auction for any stall in the same market, and will only be allowed to bid for one stall in the second round of auction. The existing tenants under the new three-year fixed term tenancy scheme (i.e. those persons who became stall tenants through the market open auctions after August 2022) are allowed to bid for a stall in the same market in the auction, but shall deliver vacant possession of the current stall to the FEHD before the effective date of commencement of the tenancy agreement. The terms and conditions of the auctions have been uploaded to the FEHD website, with details of qualifications of the bidders listed."

The date of the auctions and the number of stalls are as follows:

New Territories (1)

Auction date: September 20 (Friday) (am)

Number of stalls: 50

New Territories (2)

Auction date: September 20 (Friday) (pm)

Number of stalls: 41

Kowloon (except Lai Wan Market) (1)

Auction date: September 23 (Monday) (am)

Number of stalls: 65

Lai Wan Market

Auction date: September 23 (Monday) (pm)

Number of stalls: three

Kowloon (except Lai Wan Market) (2)

Auction date: September 24 (Tuesday) (am)

Number of stalls: 33

Hong Kong Island (except Aberdeen Market)

Auction date: September 25 (Wednesday) (am)

Number of stalls: 78

Aberdeen Market

Auction date: September 25 (Wednesday) (pm)

Number of stalls: 20

The open auctions will be held at Room 410, 4/F, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Nam Cheong Offices and Vehicle Depot, 87 Yen Chow Street West, Kowloon. Limited seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The admission tickets will be issued 30 minutes prior to the commencement of each auction. Persons who want to attend the auctions must wait at the waiting area of the auction venue and produce their Hong Kong identity card or passport for registration. The registered person will then be provided with an admission ticket for the auctions. In addition, eligible bidders after verification will be issued with a bidding paddle for the auction. The FEHD has also invited representatives of the Police and the Independent Commission Against Corruption to monitor the auctions at the auction venue in order to ensure that the open auctions are conducted in an orderly and fair manner.

Furthermore, any persons interested in the new trade mix of mobile phone/mobile phone accessories/electronic products/electronic parts, pet goods and pet food, houseware, hardware/locksmith at the upcoming Aberdeen Market open auction may attend the briefing on the Aberdeen Market auction. The briefing will be held at Room 410, 4/F, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Nam Cheong Offices and Vehicle Depot, 87 Yen Chow Street West, Kowloon, on September 13 (Friday) at 4pm. The session will last approximately one hour and limited seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Details of the open auctions and the public market stalls concerned (including stalls for open auction at reduced upset prices) have been uploaded to the FEHD website (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/pleasant_environment/tidy_market/open_auction_coming.html). Bidders interested in the auctions may visit the department website or contact the respective District Environmental Hygiene Office.

Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (September 9) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, adding that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From September 1 to 7, the CHP recorded three community-acquired LD cases and one imported LD case:

1. A male patient, aged 54 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Kowloon City District;
2. A female patient, aged 45 with good past health, who had been to Thailand during the incubation period and was classified as an imported case;
3. A male patient, aged 71 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Tuen Mun District; and
4. A male patient, aged 75 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Southern District.

"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 September 7, 78 LD cases had been recorded this year. In 2023 and 2022, there were 121 and 80 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; 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 that 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; 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.