

CHP announces one new confirmed melioidosis infection case over past week

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (September 6) said that one new confirmed melioidosis infection case had been recorded in the past week (August 30 to September 5).

The case involves a 59-year-old female with underlying illness who lives in Sham Shui Po. She developed a fever and abdominal distension on August 25 and was admitted to Caritas Medical Centre on the same day. She is in stable condition. Her clinical sample was confirmed positive for *Burkholderia pseudomallei* upon testing.

The CHP is investigating the infection source of the case. Epidemiological investigations are ongoing. So far, 13 melioidosis infection cases have been recorded in Hong Kong this year. In 2023, 17 melioidosis infection cases were recorded.

A spokesman for the CHP reiterated that person-to-person transmission and animal-to-human transmission are rare, but melioidosis bacteria can survive in the local environment. Melioidosis is an endemic disease in Hong Kong and melioidosis cases have been recorded in Hong Kong each year. According to literature, infection cases are more common after typhoons or storms. The bacterium *Burkholderia pseudomallei* of melioidosis in soil and muddy water may become exposed to the ground after typhoons or storms, and the bacteria could spread more easily with strong winds or storms. As such, the number of melioidosis cases may increase.

The CHP reminded members of the public that melioidosis can be spread by contaminated soil and water during and after typhoons and storms. Where practicable, people should stay indoors during typhoons and storms, avoid travelling to areas with potential flooding, and do not wade in or have contact with muddy water and soil. In addition, high-risk individuals should avoid paths near stormwater drains where aerosols may be generated from contaminated water.

Members of the public should also take the following preventive measures against infection:

- Avoid contact with contaminated soil;
- Wear appropriate protective clothing or footwear when participating in activities with possible contact with soil or water, e.g. using gloves and wearing boots. High-risk individuals may also consider wearing a surgical mask;
- Wash or shower after exposure to contaminated water or soil;
- Always clean any wounds as soon as possible and cover any cuts or grazes

with waterproof dressings;

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water after handling soil or gardening;
- Observe food hygiene and avoid drinking raw water; and
- Travellers can contract the disease through outdoor water sports. Risk of infection can be minimised by avoiding exposure to water sources (such as rivers, ponds or lakes) that might be contaminated.

â€‹The CHP appealed to members of the public to seek medical advice if they develop symptoms, in particular people with diabetes or other immunocompromised conditions, in order to receive appropriate medical diagnosis and treatment. For more information on melioidosis, please visit the website of the CHP

at www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/24/101110.html.

EMSD announces latest sampling results for legionella at fresh water cooling towers

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (September 6) announced that the department tested 160 water samples collected from cooling towers in 66 buildings in its routine inspections in August 2024. One sample was detected to have a total legionella count at or above the upper threshold, which is 1 000 colony-forming units per millilitre. The latest statistics are set out in Annex 1.

The cooling tower in which the sample was collected is located at 25-41 Lyndhurst Terrace, Central and Western District. The EMSD has issued nuisance notice under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance to the owner of the cooling tower requiring appropriate disinfection work to be done. Disinfection of the cooling tower in the case has already been completed by the owner. Details of the case can be found in Annex 2.

The EMSD publishes the latest statistics of the above information on a half-monthly basis on its website

(www.emsd.gov.hk/en/other_regulatory_services/cooling_towers/water_sampling/index.html).

The EMSD reminds the owners of fresh water cooling towers that they have the responsibility to design, operate and maintain cooling towers properly. They should arrange regular inspections, timely maintenance and periodic testing of the water quality in their cooling towers in accordance with the Code of Practice for Fresh Water Cooling Towers issued by the department to prevent the proliferation of legionella.

Marine Department announcement

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

As the Strong Wind Signal No.3 has been issued, the Marine Department reminds vessel owners, masters and persons-in-charge of vessels that they should take precautionary measures immediately and properly secure their vessels at safe locations.

In case of an accident, a report should be made immediately to the Vessel Traffic Centre at 2233 7801.

Reopening of Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat at suitable intervals:

The Marine Department announces that the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan has been reopened.

For details of ferry schedules, please contact relevant shipping companies direct.

Reopening of China Ferry Terminal

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat at suitable intervals:

The Marine Department announces that the China Ferry Terminal in Tsim

Sha Tsui has been reopened.

For details of ferry schedules, please contact relevant shipping companies directly.