

Red flags lowered at some beaches

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (June 29) that the Environmental Protection Department has classified the water quality at Lido Beach, Casam Beach and Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach in Tsuen Wan District as Grade 3, which means that the water quality has improved and the beaches are suitable for swimming. The red flags have been lowered.

The red flags were hoisted at the beaches earlier due to the water quality being classified as Grade 4 and unsuitable for swimming.

LD reminds employers and employees to take heat stroke preventive measures in times of Heat Stress at Work Warning

As the Heat Stress at Work Warning is now in effect, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and employees to take appropriate measures during the effective period of the warning to prevent heat stroke when working in hot weather or hot environments.

Employees who work outdoors or in non-air-conditioned indoor environments face high levels of heat stress and are at a relatively higher risk of heat stroke. Employers should assess the risk factors of heat stress for employees at work and, based on the identified risk factors, take necessary preventive and control measures, including rescheduling work periods, setting up shading covers, providing ventilation and heat dissipation equipment, and reminding employees to replenish water and rest in a timely manner.

The Heat Stress at Work Warning is formulated by the LD based on the Hong Kong Heat Index. There are three levels of the warning: Amber, Red and Black, which help employers and employees better understand the level of heat stress while working outdoors or indoors without air-conditioning systems.

A spokesman for the LD said that when the department issues the Heat

Stress at Work Warning, employers must refer to the criteria and recommendations provided in the "[Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work](#)" to conduct risk assessments, according to the workloads and other relevant heat stress risk factors, for employees who work outdoors or in non-air-conditioned indoor workplaces. Appropriate rest breaks should be arranged every hour, as far as reasonably practicable, based on various levels of the Heat Stress at Work Warning, to reduce employees' risk of heat stroke.

Employees must also follow instructions to rest on time. Whenever there are any symptoms of heat-related illnesses, such as headache, dizziness, thirst, and nausea, they should rest in a cool and shady place, drink water, and inform employers/supervisors to take appropriate action immediately.

The LD issued the "Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work", detailing the various risk factors that should be considered when conducting heat stress risk assessments and recommending corresponding control measures for identified risk factors for employers' and employees' reference. For the Heat Stress at Work Warning and related guidelines, please refer to the department's thematic webpage:

www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/prevention_of_heat_stroke_at_work.htm.

CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (June 29) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

"The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

"Children, the elderly, the obese and those with chronic illnesses, such as heart disease or high blood pressure, are more vulnerable to heat stroke. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion can place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or the late afternoon;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation;
- Do not stay inside a parked vehicle; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day. If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable. Start work slowly and pick up the pace gradually. Move to a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

â€‹The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index is high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear long-sleeved and loose-fitting clothes;
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat or use an umbrella;
- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above. Apply liberally and reapply after swimming, sweating or towelling off; and
- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

If symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

â€‹The public may obtain more information from the DH's Health Education Infoline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather report and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.

[Very Hot Weather Warning issued](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning.

To prevent heat stroke, avoid prolonged activities outdoors.

If engaged in outdoor work or activities, wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes. Stay in shaded areas as much as possible.

Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you feel sick, consult a doctor right away.

[Hospital Authority takes up Clinical Genetic Service](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) announced today (June 29) that the authority will take up the Clinical Genetic Service currently under the Department of Health (DH) from July 1 to dovetail with the latest developments of genomic medicine in Hong Kong and strengthen the provision of one-stop multi-disciplinary support for patients with genetic diseases and their families.

The HA will take up the services of the Genetic Counselling Clinic, the Genetic Screening Clinic, Neonatal Screening and Genetic Laboratory. From July 1, patients who need follow-up services at the Genetic Counseling Clinic of the DH will be transferred to the Clinical Genetics Service Unit (CGSU) of Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH) for consultation. In the future, new cases from public or private hospitals will be directly referred to HKCH's CGSU for follow-up. The patients concerned and private hospitals have been notified of the new arrangements.

In addition, HKCH's CGSU and the Department of Pathology will take up genetic screening and neonatal screening services respectively with effect from July 1. The hospital will support the Neonatal Screening Programme by screening glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase deficiencies and congenital hypothyroidisms for all newborn babies delivered in public hospitals.

As for the existing services provided by the DH's Genetic Laboratory, this will also be handed over to HKCH's Department of Pathology by December this year.

The HA spokesman said, "Patients can receive one-stop genetic diagnostic service, treatment, subsequent management as well as counselling and prevention when the HA takes up the services, which will be a key milestone

in hastening the development of genomic medicine in Hong Kong to benefit patients with genetic diseases and their families."

The HA will keep in view the development of genetic services so as to address the service demand in the future. Continuous efforts will also be made to build up talent and expertise in the HA to deliver advanced genetic services.

For information on the HA's CGSU, please visit the HKCH website (www31.ha.org.hk/hkch/Patients/Services/CGSU).