

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (May 27) released the latest grading of water quality for 38 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (i.e. Discovery Bay, see Note 2).

Twenty-one beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), 13 as Fair (Grade 2) and five as Poor (Grade 3).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Big Wave Bay Beach	Pui O Beach*
Cafeteria Old Beach	Repulse Bay Beach*
Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach	South Bay Beach
Chung Hom Kok Beach	St Stephen's Beach
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	Stanley Main Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach*	Tai Po Lung Mei Beach*
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	Tong Fuk Beach
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	Trio Beach
Kiu Tsui Beach	Turtle Cove Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach
Lo So Shing Beach	

Grade 2 beaches are:

Butterfly Beach*	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Cafeteria New Beach	Middle Bay Beach
Castle Peak Beach	Shek O Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Discovery Bay	Silverstrand Beach*
Golden Beach*	Ting Kau Beach
Kadoorie Beach	

Grade 3 beaches are:

Approach Beach	Lido Beach*
Casam Beach*	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*
Hoi Mei Wan Beach	

Compared with the grading released last week, Castle Peak Beach, Discovery Bay, Kadoorie Beach, Lower Cheung Sha Beach, Middle Bay Beach and

Silverstrand Beach have been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2, and Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach from Grade 2 to Grade 3.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

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, the 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 EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

Note 1: Lifeguard services are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at 15 gazetted beaches, marked with an asterisk above, from May 5.

Note 2: Discovery Bay is a non-gazetted beach without lifeguard service.

Sixteen persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations (with photo)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations codenamed "Lightshadow" and "Twilight" and joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion" and "Powerplayer" for four consecutive days from May 23 to yesterday (May 26). A total of 10 suspected illegal workers, five suspected employers and one suspected aider and abettor were arrested.

During the anti-illegal worker operations, ImmD Task Force officers raided 58 target locations including food and beverage areas, residential buildings, restaurants, retail shops and a vegetable stall. A total of six suspected illegal workers, two suspected employers and one suspected aider and abettor were arrested. The arrested suspected illegal workers comprised one man and five women, aged 31 to 44. Among them, one man and one woman were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any

employment. In addition, one woman was suspected of using and being in possession of a forged Hong Kong identity card. Furthermore, one man and one woman, aged 47 and 49, were suspected of employing the illegal workers. Meanwhile, one woman, aged 57, suspected of aiding and abetting persons who breached their condition of stay in Hong Kong, was also arrested.

In addition, during operations "Champion" and "Powerplayer", enforcement officers raided 87 target locations in Central and New Territories North Region including factories, a garage, a massage parlour, a residential building and warehouses. A total of four suspected illegal workers and three suspected employers were arrested. The suspected illegal workers comprised three men and one woman, aged 29 to 44. Among them, three men were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. Furthermore, two men and one woman, aged 42 to 57, were suspected of employing the illegal workers.

An ImmD spokesman said, "Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him or her shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties."

The spokesman warned, "As stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, an illegal immigrant, a person who is the subject of a removal order or a deportation order, an overstayer or a person who was refused permission to land is prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. Under the prevailing laws, it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$100,000 and up to 10 years' imprisonment."

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. Under the Immigration Ordinance, the maximum penalty for an employer employing a person who is not lawfully employable, i.e. an illegal immigrant, a person who is the subject of a removal order or a deportation order, an overstayer or a person who was refused permission to land, has been significantly increased from a fine of \$350,000 and three years' imprisonment to a fine of \$500,000 and 10 years' imprisonment to reflect the gravity of such offences. The director, manager, secretary, partner, etc, of the company concerned may also bear criminal liability. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence.

According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the

lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$150,000 and to imprisonment for one year. In that connection, the spokesman would like to remind all employers not to defy the law by employing illegal workers. The ImmD will continue to take resolute enforcement action to combat such offences.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the ImmD officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threats and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter or temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments immediately.



[Hospital Authority appreciates generous donation from MTR Corporation](#)

(with photo)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (May 27) expressed heartfelt appreciation to the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) for its generous donation of 10 000 tickets of MTR City Saver for frontline supporting staff, as well as over 46 000 Airport Express tickets to on-duty healthcare workers for their travel between the AsiaWorld-Expo station and the urban area.

The MTRCL Chief Executive Officer, Dr Jacob Kam, paid tribute to healthcare personnel for their selfless dedication and professionalism to safeguard citizens' health. He said that the MTRCL will continue to join other sectors of the community to fight off the epidemic at the earliest time and keep Hong Kong moving.

The HA Chairman, Mr Henry Fan, said, "We express heartfelt gratitude to the MTRCL for its continuous support and encouragement to our staff in fighting against the epidemic since 2020. Their timely and kind initiatives have given staunch support and enormous encouragement to all our staff. The move is a recognition of our efforts during the fight against the epidemic."

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**EDB to provide financial support for
frontline cleansing and security
workers of post-secondary education
institutions, non-government schools**

and kindergartens

The Education Bureau (EDB) issued letters/circular memorandum today (May 27) to inform schools and related organisations of the details about the provision of an allowance for cleansing and security workers engaged by post-secondary education institutions (PSEIs), non-government schools and kindergartens (and their service contractors) under the sixth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF 6.0). It is estimated that the above measure will benefit around 33 000 frontline cleansing and security workers. The total expenditure is about \$334 million.

A spokesman for the EDB said that the AEF 6.0, with further extension of the coverage of the subsidy, will provide a monthly allowance of \$2,000 for five months (the eligible months for the allowance are the months of February to June 2022) to frontline cleansing and security workers of PSEIs, non-government schools and kindergartens, with a view to giving financial support for their anti-epidemic efforts and recognition of their committed services provided at this critical juncture.

Under the AEF 6.0, the Cleansing and Security Service Provider Subsidy Scheme for Non-Government Schools and Kindergartens will cover aided schools (including special schools), schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme, caput schools, schools under the English Schools Foundation, international schools, Private Independent Schools, kindergartens and private day schools offering full and formal curriculum. Cleansing and security workers directly employed by non-government schools and kindergartens as well as those deployed to perform duties at schools by the cleansing/security service contractors commissioned by schools are also eligible to apply for the allowance. The Cleansing and Security Service Provider Subsidy Scheme for Post-secondary Education Institutions will provide a special allowance to frontline cleansing and security workers engaged by 36 PSEIs (including the University Grants Committee-funded universities, the Vocational Training Council, and self-financing institutions offering locally accredited sub-degree and/or degree programmes) and their service contractors.

In order to expedite the vetting process and provision of allowances, the applications should be submitted through PSEIs, schools or their service contractors. Frontline cleansing or security workers are not required to submit applications on their own. Upon receipt of disbursement of the allowances, PSEIs, schools and service contractors should disburse the allowances to eligible workers as soon as possible.

The EDB has uploaded the letters/circular memorandum to the EDB website (www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-sch/diseases-prevention/special_anti-epidemic_subsidy.html) or issued them to the relevant PSEIs, detailing the application and disbursement arrangements for the relevant allowances.

Demand notes for Government rent issued

The Lands Department announced today (May 27) that demand notes for Government rent in excess of \$100 per annum for the half year ending June 24 in respect of properties subject to the Government Leases Ordinance (Cap. 40) and certain other properties have been issued.

Payers can settle Government rent through various electronic means including autopay, bank automated teller machines, e-Cheque/e-Cashier's Order, the Faster Payment System, payment by phone service (PPS), and bill payment services provided by banks and PPS on the Internet. Payment may also be made in person and in cash at designated convenience stores. For details, please visit the Treasury's website at www.try.gov.hk.

Payment may be made by sending a crossed cheque to PO Box No. 28000, Gloucester Road Post Office, Hong Kong, or in person to any post office. Please ensure sufficient mailing time and postage to make the delivery in order. Underpaid mail will be rejected. For locations of post offices and their opening hours, please call Hongkong Post's enquiry hotline at 2921 2222 or visit its website at www.hongkongpost.hk.

Government rent payers who have not received their demand notes should enquire at the Government Rent and Premium Unit of the Lands Department at 1/F, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong, or call 2231 3033.

Purchasers of properties are strongly advised to instruct their solicitors to ensure that Government rent has been paid to date at the time of purchase. Enquiries on outstanding accounts can be made at 2231 3033 or by email to landsd@landsd.gov.hk. An enquiry fee is payable for each property if a written confirmation of accounts position is needed.