

FEHD to hold another webinar for funeral business sectors to assist next of kin to handle bodies of deceased as soon as possible

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has been making every effort in assisting the funeral business sectors and the next of kin to handle the after-death arrangements for the deceased as early as possible through initiatives such as enhancing cremation services and co-ordinating the supply of coffins. The FEHD will hold the fourth webinar tomorrow (April 29) to discuss with funeral business sectors on integration of resources and services for this purpose.

Three webinars were organised by the FEHD in March, namely to refresh practitioners' memories on the guidelines in Precautions for Handling and Disposal of Dead Bodies, issued by the Government in February 2020, to exchange views on rationalising the workflow and shortening the time required for the handling of after-death arrangements, and to invite a specialist in clinical microbiology and infection to elaborate on the precautionary measures and points warranting attention on the handling of dead bodies. The fourth webinar to be held tomorrow will focus on exploring ways to integrate existing resources and services with a view to assisting the next of kin to make early funeral arrangements of the deceased. The video recording of the webinar will be uploaded onto the FEHD's webpage for reference.

According to statistics of the FEHD, as at April 27, among the around 1 900 bodies stored at the body storage facility in Fu Shan, Sha Tin, around 94 per cent have been cremated, have cremation sessions booked on or before May 17, or have completed payments with cremation sessions to be booked. Another 3 per cent have completed or are arranging coffin burials, or have departed from Hong Kong. According to the information of the Department of Health (DH), for the remaining 60 bodies or so, the identification procedures have been completed, and the DH has called the next of kin of the deceased again and appealed to them to collect the dead bodies as soon as possible for handling the after-death arrangements.

A spokesman for the FEHD said that there are still sufficient cremation sessions available for booking at present, and appealed to the next of kin to make good use of cremation services as far as practicable to arrange after-death arrangements of the deceased early.

With the advent of the fifth wave of the pandemic, the FEHD has proactively increased the daily cremation sessions available for booking since February to cope with the significant increase in demand for cremation services. With the advanced commissioning of the two new cremators at Wo Hop Shek Crematorium, the number of daily cremation sessions has been maintained at over 300 since early April. All crematoria have been in operation almost

round-the-clock, except for the Cheung Chau Crematorium which has had very low utilisation. The cremation dates available on the booking system have been extended from the next 15 days to the next 20 days to ensure sufficient sessions are available for booking.

To further enhance the efficiency of handling cremation applications, the service hours of the Hong Kong Island Joint Office and Kowloon Joint Office have been extended since March 25. The FEHD has also launched the Online Cremation Application and Pre-paid System 2.0 on April 1 to facilitate members of the public and licensed undertakers in printing out the application form for cremation service and making advanced payment for cremation online once inputting the required information through the system. The FEHD has also set up a designated service counter at the Kowloon Joint Office for handling applications through the online system. The processing time for individual cremation applications has thus been greatly reduced by around 80 per cent.

The FEHD again urged the funeral trade to accord priority to the handling of the bodies kept in the storage facility, and also appealed to the next of kin to collect the bodies of their deceased family members early to make funeral arrangements. The FEHD has approached the seven licensed funeral parlours again yesterday (April 27) and learned that around 43 per cent of service hall sessions are available for booking during weekdays in early May, while about 20 per cent of service hall sessions are available for booking during weekends and public holidays.

The FEHD thanks the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGH) for its response to the FEHD's appeal that from yesterday onwards, it will regularly make public through its service website (funeralservices.tungwahcsd.org/?_lang=en) the number of service halls available for booking in the coming 30 days at its three funeral parlours. In addition, the TWGH has also extended its arrangement to open three service halls at its Global Funeral Parlour for use by the funeral trade free of charge for holding daytime funeral ceremonies without staying for the overnight session till May 31.

[Appeal for information on missing man in North Point \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (April 28) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in North Point.

Yip Ching-kong, aged 37, went missing after he left his residence on Wharf Road last night (April 27). His family made a report to Police today.

He is about 1.76 metres tall, 85 kilograms in weight and of medium build. He has a round face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He

was last seen wearing a white short-sleeved T-shirt, blue jeans, brown sports shoes and carrying a blue backpack.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Hong Kong Island on 2860 1040 or 9886 0034 or email to rmpu-hki@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



[Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices at employment agency](#)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs today (April 28) arrested a female staff member of an employment agency suspected of having applied false trade descriptions to an employment agency service supplied, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that a female staff member of an employment agency in Mong Kok has made a false claim to a customer that the medical check-up result of the foreign domestic helper hired by the customer was normal, which was contrary to the fact.

After investigation, Customs officers today arrested a 42-year-old woman suspected to be connected with the case.

An investigation is ongoing and the arrested woman has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TD0 and consumers to procure services at reputable shops.

Under the TD0, any trader who applies a false trade description to a service supplied to a consumer commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TD0 to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

Government follows up on positive results of sewage surveillance and appeals to residents to undergo virus testing

The Government announced today (April 28) that in order to fight the coronavirus epidemic, the Environmental Protection Department and the Drainage Services Department in collaboration with the cross-disciplinary team of the University of Hong Kong had strengthened the sampling of sewage for virus testing in all districts, and had detected positive results in many areas, indicating that there may be hidden cases in the premises within these areas.

Rapid test

As regards positive sewage testing results with relatively high viral loads in the following areas, the Housing Department and the respective District Offices will commence distributing about 220 000 sets of the COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits to residents, cleaning workers and property management staff working in the following areas for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identify infected persons:

- Southern District – Shek Pai Wan Estate, Yue Kwong Chuen, Yue Fai Court, Ma Hang Estate, Lung Yan Court and Lung Tak Court
- Tuen Mun District – Alpine Garden, Handsome Court, Harvest Garden, Hong King Garden, Rainbow Garden, Hoi Tak Gardens, Chi Lok Fa Yuen, Kam Fai Garden, JC Place and residential premises around Tsing Wu Square (See Annex)
- Yuen Long District – Tin Yan Estate, Tin Yuet Estate, Central Park Towers and Central Park Towers Phase 2

Members of the public may refer to

(www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html) for enquiries relating to the use of the RAT kits.

When using an RAT kit, please pay attention to and follow the instructions from the manufacturer to perform the test and read the result properly. It is advisable to record the displayed result by taking a photo immediately after reading. Users should wash their hands before and after performing the tests, and avoid placing non-essential items within the specimen collection area. After completing the test, wrap and seal all components of the test kit carefully and dispose properly. If the household environment is contaminated during the specimen collecting process, disinfection should be conducted with 1 in 49 diluted bleach solution or 70 per cent alcohol.

People who obtained a positive result through an RAT for the first time can report via the online platform "Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test" (www.chp.gov.hk/ratp). If individuals encounter difficulties using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will contact the relevant person later to finish the report procedure.

DH to enforce new legislation on alternative smoking products starting this Saturday

The Department of Health (DH) today (April 28) reminded members of the public, incoming travellers and traders that the Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office (TACO) of the DH will start carrying out new enforcement measures subsequent to the operation of the Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 this Saturday (April 30).

The Ordinance prohibits the import, promotion, manufacture, sale and possession for commercial purposes of alternative smoking products (ASPs). Offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

"The ban covers electronic smoking products, heated tobacco products, herbal cigarettes, and their accessories. Starting this Saturday, Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspectors will conduct inspections, investigate complaints and carry out enforcement actions accordingly," a spokesman for the DH said.

According to the Ordinance, import of an ASP by way of parcels, cargoes or bringing in by incoming travellers is prohibited. Articles carried by persons in transit at Hong Kong International Airport without passing through

immigration control, air transshipment cargoes or articles staying on an aircraft or in a vessel during transit are exempted. Travellers bringing ASPs into Hong Kong, regardless of the quantity or whether they are for personal use, must declare them to the Customs and Excise Department.

Under the Ordinance, no person may smoke or carry an activated ASP in a statutory no smoking area. Offenders will be issued with a \$1,500 fixed penalty notice.

The TACO has developed a set of frequently asked questions, a pamphlet and other materials to assist the public, incoming travellers and traders in complying with the legislative requirements. Members of the public, incoming travellers and traders can visit the TACO website (www.taco.gov.hk) to learn more about the provisions of the new legislation.

The spokesman also cautioned against the use of any ASPs and stressed that these products contain amounts of nicotine similar to those of conventional cigarettes in order to sustain addiction. In addition, health hazards of long-term exposure to these new products are unknown.

"We appeal to smokers to quit smoking as early as possible for their own health and that of others. They are encouraged to call the DH's Integrated Smoking Cessation Hotline on 1833 183. The hotline is operated by registered nurses, providing professional counselling services on smoking cessation," the spokesman said. Information on smoking cessation can also be obtained from www.livetobaccofree.hk.

The spokesman remarked that today is World Day for Safety and Health at Work. He reminded that ASPs, like conventional cigarettes, release harmful secondhand smoke and urged members of the public to refrain from using any smoking products at workplaces.