

Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (January 30) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

Regional flag-selling activities cancelled

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has been informed by three flag day organisers that regional flag-selling activities in public places originally scheduled to be held today (January 30) have been cancelled, a spokesman for the SWD said.

Three charities had been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales from 7am to 12.30pm today. They are, on Hong Kong Island, Chinese Evangelical Zion Church Limited; in Kowloon, the Hong Kong Road Safety Association; and in the New Territories, North District Hospital Charitable Foundation.

For enquiries, please contact the organisations concerned. Contact information of the organisations is as follows:

Region	Name of organisation	Contact person	Contact number
Hong Kong Island	Chinese Evangelical Zion Church Limited	Miss Leung	2324 0113
Kowloon	The Hong Kong Road Safety Association	Mr Han	2577 9682
New Territories	North District Hospital Charitable Foundation	Mr Man	2683 8888

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities covered by the issued Public Subscription Permits have been published on the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search). Permits for flag days containing information on contact methods of the flag-selling organisations and the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_flagdays) for

reference. For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the designated hotline of the 1823 Call Centre at 3142 2678.

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

The Government has exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and published in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at five specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

Currently in all districts in Hong Kong (except the following specified areas), if confirmed cases not epidemiologically linked to each other are found in two or more units in the same building in the past 14 days, the building will be included in the compulsory testing notice. Furthermore, the Government delineates specified areas in accordance with risk assessments. If there is one or more new confirmed cases found in the residential buildings (including buildings for both commercial and residential uses) in the areas, or there are sewage samples tested positive which implied possible infection risks, the buildings will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

The Government has delineated earlier four specified areas, namely the "Jordan specified area" bounded by Nathan Road to its east, Austin Road to its south, Ferry Street, Man Cheong Street, Man Wui Street and Canton Road to its west, and Kansu Street to its north, the "Yau Ma Tei/Mong Kok specified area" bounded by Nathan Road to its east, Public Square Street to its south, Ferry Street to its west and Dundas Street to its north, the "Hung Hom specified area" bounded by Station Lane to its northeast, Dock Street and Po Loi Street to its southeast, Winslow Street and Hung Hom South Road to its southwest, and Chatham Road North to its northwest and the "Sham Shui Po specified area" bounded by Yen Chow Street to its northwest, Tai Po Road to its northeast, Maple Street to its southeast and Lai Chi Kok Road to its southwest.

Four buildings fulfilling the above criteria were included in the compulsory testing notice today (January 29). In addition, since a number of confirmed cases were found at the construction site for Superstructure and Associated Works Contract for Redevelopment of Kwong Wah Hospital (Phase 1) over a short period of time, relevant persons who had been to the site also

have to undergo compulsory testing.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are as follows:

1. Any person who had been present at any specified premises listed in Annex 1 for more than two hours at any time during the period from January 16 to January 29, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by February 1, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 27 and January 29, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.
2. Any person who had worked or had been present for more than two hours at the construction site for contract number 8110059232 – Superstructure and Associated Works Contract for Redevelopment of Kwong Wah Hospital (Phase 1) at any time during the period from January 16 to January 29, 2021, have to undergo testing by February 1, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between January 27 and January 29, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

The Government will set up a mobile specimen collection station at Lai On Estate in Sham Shui Po on January 31, 2021 (Sunday). The service period of the mobile specimen collection station at the Hung Hom Municipal Services Building Sports Centre will be extended to February 1, 2021 (Monday). The mobile specimen collection station at Sha Tsui Road Playground in Tsuen Wan will be relocated to Tsuen Wing Street Playground and will be open to February 5, 2021 (Friday) tentatively. The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations in various districts providing free COVID-19 nucleic acid testing services for the general public are stated in Annex 2. Apart from mobile specimen collection stations, persons subject to compulsory testing can also choose to attend any of the community testing centres in all districts to receive testing free of charge.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable) at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) for testing;
2. To attend any of the community testing centres (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/);
3. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from any of the 121 post offices, vending machines set up at 20 MTR stations or 47 designated general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times, at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);
4. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority;

5. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the Department of Health (DH) and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf); or
6. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the Centre for Health Protection (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau cautioned that testing received at accident and emergency departments of the Hospital Authority or during hospital stays, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the community testing centres."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notification containing result of the test for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Furthermore, persons subject to testing under the compulsory testing notices should, as far as reasonably practicable, take appropriate personal disease prevention measures including wearing a mask and maintaining hand hygiene, and, unless for the purpose of undergoing the specified test, stay at their place of residence and avoid going out until the test result is ascertained as far as possible.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm. If persons subject to compulsory testing plan to conduct testing at any of the community testing centres, they can check the centre's appointment status in advance. The hotlines of the community testing centres are available at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/info/.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to the relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Relevant officers of different government departments are empowered to perform certain functions under the relevant Regulations under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), including requesting individuals to provide information and assistance when necessary. Any person who fails to

comply with the relevant request commits an offence and would be liable to a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). Collection and use of any personal data for conducting COVID-19 tests must meet the requirements under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). Government departments or testing service providers which handle the relevant information may provide the data to DH or other relevant departments for anti-epidemic purpose as necessary. The workflow does not involve the provision of any personal data to organisations or persons outside Hong Kong.

The spokesman said, "The Government will continually review the compulsory testing arrangement of the above-mentioned specified areas taking into account the epidemic development, including whether new 'specified areas' will be delineated. The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or contacted confirmed cases), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

Peregrine falcon tests positive for H5 virus

A carcass of a peregrine falcon found in Wu Kai Sha was suspected to be positive for the H5 avian influenza virus based on preliminary testing, a spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (January 29). Further confirmatory tests are being conducted.

The bird carcass was found and collected at Lake Silver, Wu Kai Sha. The peregrine falcon is a common resident and winter visitor species.

The spokesman said no chicken farms are within 3 kilometres of where the dead bird was found. Nevertheless, the AFCD will still phone poultry farmers to remind them to strengthen precautionary and biosecurity measures against avian influenza. Letters will be issued to pet bird shop owners and licence holders of pet poultry and racing pigeons reminding them that proper precautions must be taken. The AFCD will continue to monitor the situation closely.

The spokesman said the department will closely monitor poultry farms and wholesale market to ensure that proper precautions against avian influenza have been implemented. The department will continue its wild bird monitoring and surveillance.

"People should avoid personal contact with wild birds and live poultry and their droppings. They should clean their hands thoroughly after coming into contact with them. The public can call 1823 for follow-up if they come across suspicious, sick or dead birds, including the carcasses of wild birds

and poultry," the spokesman said.

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) will continue to be vigilant over live poultry stalls. It will also remind stall operators to maintain good hygiene.

The Department of Health will keep up with its health education to remind the public to maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene to prevent avian influenza.

The AFCD, the FEHD, the Customs and Excise Department and the Police will strive to deter the illegal import of poultry and birds into Hong Kong to minimise the risk of avian influenza outbreaks caused by imported poultry and birds that have not gone through inspection and quarantine.

All relevant government departments will continue to be highly vigilant and strictly enforce preventive measures against avian influenza.

Health advice is available from the "H5N1 Health Advice" page on the AFCD website at www.afcd.gov.hk.

Government's response to media enquiries on deployment of civil servants in anti-epidemic work

In response to media enquiries on the deployment of civil servants to participate in the testing operations, a spokesman for the Government gave the following reply today (January 29):

In late November last year, the epidemic situation in Hong Kong developed into the fourth wave of outbreak. As of today, although the situation has eased, it remains severe. The Government must take decisive actions and respond swiftly to combat the epidemic. In this regard, it is the duty of all government departments and civil servants at all levels to participate in the anti-epidemic work.

Colleagues of the Home Affairs Department and the Department of Health played an essential role during the compulsory testing operation at the specified "restricted area" in Jordan last week. Moreover, around 3 000 civil servants including staff of both the disciplined services and civilian grades from the Housing Department, the Labour Department, the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Drainage Services Department, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and the Water Supplies Department participated in the operation. They made every effort in helping the registration work and the distribution of supplies in the area.

The preparation for this operation was intense as it required the deployment of large amount of manpower in a very short period of time. Colleagues from various departments worked together and completed their mission by working zealously day and night so as to safeguard public health. They conducted 3 650 home visits, collected specimen door to door for homes for the aged and other people with impaired mobility in the area, provided food pack and cleansing consumables to residents, delivered hot meals to elderly in need, and also arranged places for rest to people without accommodation in the area. The operation was smoothly conducted, not only because of the co-operation of the some 7 000 residents in the "restricted area" and the set up of temporary specimen collection stations by the contractors, but also the efforts of the civil service colleagues involved.

Virus testing will continue to be an important part of the Government's effort in containing the epidemic. As the Chief Executive has pointed out, the Government must be more proactive in this regard with a view to identifying the asymptomatic carriers still in the community within the shortest possible time. The Government will not rule out the need to conduct compulsory testing in different areas in various scales or forms at short notice. Therefore, the Government has already requested all departments to make adequate preparations in terms of manpower and resources allocation such that they can mobilise their staff under a short timeframe to take part in the anti-epidemic operations and handle unforeseen needs.

Departments would be happy to answer any questions from colleagues regarding the manpower planning of relevant operations. However, any misinformation or false allegations disclosed by colleagues would not only impair the Government's efforts in fighting against the epidemic, but also the image of the civil service, which is unfair to participating colleagues. The Government reiterates that it is the duty of all departments and civil servants to participate in anti-epidemic work. We believe that majority of civil servants would, with public interest in mind, share the common goal and would like to participate in relevant operations with their best effort, in order for the epidemic to end in Hong Kong as soon as possible.