

Director of Health issues isolation order for Number 20, 22, 24 and 26 Reclamation Street, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon

The Director of Health issued today (January 15) an isolation order for Number 20, 22, 24 and 26 Reclamation Street, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon pursuant to the power under section 25 of the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) (the Regulation) in order to facilitate contact tracing work in the buildings, with a view to preventing the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the community and safeguarding public health.

The order is issued following the recent occurrence of a number of COVID-19 cases related to the buildings. The contact tracing work of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is made difficult as there are many subdivided units within the buildings without residents' lists. The order facilitates the identification of any remaining residents and arranging their quarantine at quarantine centres as soon as possible.

Under the order, no person, other than a health officer, shall enter or leave the buildings, or bring into or take out of the buildings any articles, except with the written permission given by a health officer under section 31 of the Regulation. The isolation order remains effective until 11.59pm on January 28.

With assistance from the Police, the CHP has arranged about 90 residents to be quarantined at quarantine centres. The CHP will continue to arrange remaining residents to quarantine facilities with assistance from the Police.

"Taking into consideration the special circumstances surrounding the buildings concerned, DH has no choice but resorts to this exceptional measure," a spokesman of DH said.

The spokesman also reminded that persons who had been present at the buildings for more than two hours at any time during the period from December 30, 2020, to January 12, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers) are required by the compulsory testing notice issued by the Secretary for Food and Health on January 12 to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test by today.

Meetings of Legislative Council and its Committees

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

Details of the meetings of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and its Committees to be held in the LegCo Complex during the week from January 18 to 22 are available in the meeting schedule attached.

The information in the meeting schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the "LegCo Calendar" on the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meetings, including meetings conducted by videoconferencing, via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meetings which are not conducted by videoconferencing at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

CHP investigates 38 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, January 15, the CHP was investigating 38 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 9 453 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 9 452 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, three are imported cases.

A total of 568 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (January 1 to 14), including 524 local cases of which 165 are from unknown sources.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain

Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop.

In view of the latest epidemic developments in the Mainland, starting tomorrow (January 16), inbound travellers who have been to Guangxi Province or Shaanxi Province in the past 14 days arriving via land boundary control points will be provided with specimen collection containers. They are required to collect their deep throat saliva samples by themselves in accordance with the instructions and return the samples for conducting COVID-19 testing. The arrangement of distributing specimen collection containers to inbound travelers who have been to Tianjin, Heilongjiang Province, Liaoning Province, Beijing, Hebei Province, Shanxi Province and Jilin Province in the past 14 days arriving via land boundary control points, which has come into effect earlier, remains unchanged.

Regarding the severe epidemic situation, the CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes and illicit heat-not-burn products worth about \\$26 million \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs today (January 15) seized about 8.9 million suspected illicit cigarettes and 600 000 suspected illicit heat-not-burn (HNB) products with an estimated market value of about \$26 million and a duty potential of about \$18 million in Ping Che. Customs believes that a suspected illicit cigarette storehouse has been raided during the operation.

During an anti-illicit cigarette operation conducted in Ping Che in the early hours today, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected illicit

cigarettes and illicit HNB products from a metal hut and a light goods vehicle (LGV). A 24-year-old man suspected to be in connection with the case was arrested and the LGV has been detained.

Investigation is ongoing and the likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

Customs will continue to enhance enforcement against illicit cigarette activities on all fronts through intelligence analysis.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO), tobacco products are dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. All HNB products containing tobacco in content are also dutiable goods subject to the control of the DCO. Any person who imports, possesses, sells or buys dutiable commodities without a valid licence commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

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



Red tide sighted

A red tide has been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (January 15).

The red tide was spotted by a mariculturist on January 13 at Three Fathoms Cove, including Yung Shue Au Fish Culture Zone. The red tide still persists. No associated death of fish has been reported.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The red tide was formed by *Noctiluca scintillans* and *Akashiwo sanguinea*, which are commonly found in Hong Kong waters and are non-toxic."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at the Yim Tin Tsai, Yim Tin Tsai (East), Yung Shue Au and Lo Fu Wat fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase

aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue to monitor red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.