

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (December 24) released the latest grading of water quality for four gazetted beaches that are open all year round for swimming (see Note).

Three beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1) and one as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Deep Water Bay Beach	Silverstrand Beach
Golden Beach	

Grade 2 beach is:

Clear Water Bay Second Beach

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.

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: In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced that all gazetted beaches were closed from December 10 until further notice.

MD announcement

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The Marine Department today (December 24) reminded masters, coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels navigating in Hong Kong waters to proceed at

a safe speed and exercise extreme caution because restricted visibility of less than 2 nautical miles has been reported.

Appropriate sound signals shall be made when underway or at anchor. All vessels must comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collision at Sea.

Also, when radar is used without the benefit of adequate plotting facilities, the information obtained from the equipment is rather limited and should be construed accordingly.

Visibility reports are broadcast by the Vessel Traffic Centre (VTC) on VHF channels 02, 12, 14, 63 and 67.

In the event of an accident, a report shall be made immediately to the VTC at Tel: 2233 7801.

FEHD orders Mong Kok light refreshment restaurant to suspend business for 14 days

The Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene has ordered a light refreshment restaurant in Mong Kok to suspend business for 14 days as the operator repeatedly breached the Food Business Regulation (FBR) by extending the business area illegally.

The premises, located at Shop A on the ground Floor of Skyline Tower, 14-18 Tong Mi Road, Mong Kok, was ordered to suspend business from today (December 24) to January 6, 2021.

"In October last year and October this year, two convictions for the above-mentioned breach were recorded against the shop. A total fine of \$7,000 was levied by the court and 30 demerit points were registered against the licensee under the department's demerit points system. The contraventions resulted in the 14-day licence suspension," a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said.

The licensee of the shop had a record of two convictions for the same offence in March and June last year. A total fine of \$5,500 was levied and 30 demerit points were also registered. The breaches led to a licence suspension for seven days in August last year.

The spokesman reminded the licensees of food premises to comply with the FBR or their licences could be suspended or cancelled.

Licensed food premises are required to exhibit a sign, at a conspicuous place near the main entrance, indicating that the premises have been licensed. A list of licensed food premises is available on the FEHD's website (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/index.html).

Assessment Committee for the Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by Non-government Organisations convenes third meeting

The third meeting of the Assessment Committee for the Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by Non-government Organisations, chaired by the Under Secretary for Transport and Housing, Dr Raymond So Wai-man, was convened via video conferencing this morning (December 24).

The Assessment Committee agreed to subsidise the following transitional housing projects:

(i) Transitional housing development at the ex-Tsuen Wan Lutheran School premises, Cheung Shan Estate, Tsuen Wan, by The Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society, Kowloon. With total funding of \$71.93 million, it is expected to provide about 142 units;

(ii) Transitional housing development at Dah Way Industrial Building, 86 Hung To Road, Kwun Tong, by The Society For Community Organization Limited. With total funding of \$61.5 million, it is expected to provide about 116 units; and

(iii) Transitional housing development at the junction of Yau Ma Hom Road and Cheung Wing Road, Kwai Chung, by The Society For Community Organization Limited. With total funding of \$109.97 million, it is expected to provide about 200 units.

Red tide sighted

A red tide has been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental

red tide working group reported today (December 24).

The red tide was spotted by a mariculturist at Long Harbour yesterday (December 23). The red tide still persists and no associated death of fish has been reported so far.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The red tide was formed by *Mesodinium rubrum*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters and non-toxic."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at the Tap Mun, Kau Lau Wan and Sham Wan 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.