



Room 2006, 20th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong
Tel: 848 2551 Fax: 845 3489
香港中環花園道美利大廈20樓2006室 • 電話: 848 2551 傳真機: 845 3489

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for information

Information Note on Drawing of Sea Water for Keeping Seafood

Introduction

Subsequent to the outbreak of cholera in 1994, a number of departments had adopted effective measures to deal with the problem, among which some targeted specifically on sea water for keeping seafood. Measures taken and their latest position are summarised below.

The Two Municipal Departments

New Bylaws

Both the Urban Council and Regional Council enacted their Food Business Bylaws in July 1994 which specifies the microbiological standard of water for keeping live fish for human consumption recommended by DH and EPD. The two Municipal Departments have also conducted comprehensive water sampling programme since then to monitor the quality of water in fish tanks of restaurants and other food premises.

Code of Practice

A code of practice for keeping live fish and shellfish in fish tanks and a circular letter warning all food business operators not to take or accept sea water drawn from Victoria Harbour, typhoon shelters and other polluted sources were issued. Some restaurants have, as a result, installed ultra-violet light sterilisation system and used artificial sea water in their fish tanks, whilst the others resorted to proper maintenance and cleansing of fish tanks, and choice of reputable sea water supplier.

Warning letters had been issued to food premises using sub-standard fish tanks for keeping live fish, and prosecutions were taken out against those which failed to rectify the situation.

Environmental Protection Department

EPD has identified three suitable sites in Sai Kung where water suppliers can obtain clean sea water, namely Ko Tong Hau, Little Palm and Tso Wo Hang. No sea water should be drawn from identified black spots i.e. typhoon shelters, the Victoria Harbour, Deep Bay, Tsim Sha Tsui waterfront near the International Mail Centre and stretches along Castle Peak Road.

Lands Department

The Lands Department had erected 300 meters of fencing along the waterfronts of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter and Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade as a measure to stop fish traders from drawing sea water there. District Lands Officer/HK South has obtained a written undertaking from fish traders in Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter that they would cease taking water there and a supplementary tenancy provision from the two tenants that they would stop pumping water there.

[misc:spel]

Health and Welfare Branch
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