



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

(Translation)

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By Fax

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Clerk to Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn.: Mr. Jove CHAN)
[Fax: 2185 7845]

Dear Mr. Chan,

**Tackling the problem of proliferation of flies
in the Tuen Mun district and Ha Pak Nai**

When the captioned agenda item was discussed by the Panel on 12 November 2013, Members requested that the Administration provide supplementary information after the meeting, including the number of cases of cholera, dysentery and food poisoning over the past five years in Hong Kong, and inspections conducted at the affected areas by government departments. Our response is set out as follows.

**Number of cases of cholera, dysentery and food poisoning
over the past five years in Hong Kong**

As far as public environmental hygiene is concerned, flies may spread pathogens by contaminating food, thus causing diseases such as cholera and dysentery. The Administration informed the Panel at the

meeting on 12 November that the number of cases of cholera, dysentery and food poisoning over the past few years in Hong Kong had been reviewed. No significant variation was found. The number of these cases is tabulated below.

Year	Cholera ^a	Dysentery	Food poisoning	
			Number of cases	Number of persons affected
2009	0	92	407	1,540
2010	9	80	316	1,052
2011	2	61	340	1,284
2012	2	66	378	1,529
2013 (as at October)	2	57	279	903

Note: The figures of recent months are provisional and will be updated by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health based on the latest information.

Inspections carried out by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

According to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), licensed food premises are inspected once every four weeks, ten weeks or 20 weeks depending on their risk categories and hygiene standards. The focus of such inspections is on food safety and health education, in addition to the general sanitary conditions of these premises.

Apart from the aforesaid regular inspections, the FEHD, upon receipt of complaints regarding environmental hygiene, will also deploy staff to the areas concerned for investigation.

In early October 2013, the FEHD learned about the problem of proliferation of flies in a number of areas in the Tuen Mun district. Thereupon, the FEHD, in collaboration with other relevant government departments and organisations, deployed staff to inspect areas where a relatively large number of flies were found. During the inspection, they looked for the main cause of the problem and mapped out enhancements to the cleansing, preventive and control work on the ground. The FEHD conducted investigations in the markets of Leung King Estate, Sam Shing Estate and Butterfly Estate, where fly infestations were reported, on 8, 9

and 10 October respectively. The FEHD staff gave advice on environmental hygiene and fly control to the persons-in-charge of the management companies of these markets. The measures suggested include increasing the frequency of cleansing work in the markets and applying fly sprays, keeping the floors of the markets clean and hygienic at all times, washing the floors and channels frequently to preventing flies breeding in food waste.

The environmental hygiene conditions in the markets of Leung King Estate, Butterfly Estate and Sam Shing Estate have since improved significantly. Nevertheless, in addition to the continued inspection of the licensed food premises in the markets on a regular basis, the FEHD will in the next two months conduct weekly inspections to the spots in these three markets where a relatively large number of flies were found, and when necessary, give advice on environmental hygiene and fly control to the Housing Department/The Link.

The FEHD staff carried out inspections on 11, 17 and 18 October in Ha Pak Nai Tsuen, Yuen Long and the vicinity of potential fly breeding grounds, such as refuse collection points, public toilets, channels, gullies, farm lands, food waste processing plant, pig farms. The FEHD did not find obvious signs of flies breeding. Nevertheless, the FEHD staff had immediately arranged for pest control contractors to strengthen fly control work in places such as refuse collections points, channels, gullies, and drainage in the village. The FEHD also advised villagers to handle household refuse properly and cover the rubbish bins tightly to prevent breeding of flies. The FEHD had asked the pest control contractors to increase the frequency of pest control work in the area when necessary. The FEHD staff reviewed the conditions of the aforesaid area from 21 to 29 October and did not find any obvious signs of fly infestations. Apart from continuing to inspect the area regularly, the FEHD will in the next two months conduct weekly inspections to the areas where a relatively large number of flies were found.

Inspections carried out by the Housing Department

As informed by the Housing Department (HD), Leung King Estate is an estate under the Tenants Purchase Scheme and its owners' corporation is responsible for the daily management of public areas, including conducting inspections. For Butterfly Estate and Sam Shing Estate, the HD has been performing regular inspections to the public areas. Prior to 8 October 2013, inspections were conducted regularly

once a day. During these inspections, the HD reviews the hygiene conditions of all public areas of the estates, including refuse collection points and nearby markets.

After learning of the problem of proliferation of flies in a number of areas in the Tuen Mun district in early October 2013, the HD has conducted investigations in public areas of the estates, including refuse collection points and nearby markets, under its management and stepped up cleansing work in public areas.

In future, the HD will enhance daily inspections of the areas where a relatively large number of flies were found.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

(Diane WONG)
for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c.

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