

Cleansing Programme of Public Swimming Pools

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the cleansing programme of public swimming pools introduced since September 2004 after the sighting of bloodworms at the pools.

Background

2. During the period from August to early September 2004, bloodworms were found in some of our public swimming pools. Investigation by concerned Government departments and independent experts concluded that there was no evidence to suggest that bloodworms could actually breed in the pool water, and the filtrations systems in the pools were in normal operation. However, certain environment in and outside the pool compounds and some special installations (such as play equipment and artificial turf) in some pools could serve as breeding grounds.

3. A series of measures have thus been introduced to enhance the environmental hygiene standard of public swimming pools which include –

- a) carry out joint inspection of all public swimming pools with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to identify and remove potential breeding sites;
- b) carry out large scale cleansing operation for all public swimming pools and to continue with the operation for each pool to be closed for half a day each week to carry out thorough cleansing work;
- c) review the design of pool facilities (play equipment and

- artificial turf) together with the Architectural Services Department and to make improvement to the design or remove such facilities with potential risk;
- d) increase the frequency of conducting bacteriological test of water samples from pools from once a month to once a week; and
 - e) strictly enforcing the requirement for swimmers to go through a shower and footbath for cleaning up from head to toe before entering the swimming pool. Moreover, people wearing slippers to enter the pool area must soak their feet and slippers in clean water by going through a footbath and a sanitising floor matt to avoid dirtying the pool.

We will also set up a steering committee with the participation of relevant Government departments and expert advisors to conduct a critical and in-depth review on the management of public swimming pools and related health and hygiene issues. This paper in particular briefs members on the weekly cleansing programme.

Cleansing

4. Routine cleansing is now normally carried out at public swimming pools each day during sessional breaks, and during opening hours when such operation does not cause inconvenience to the swimmers. Cleansing work on pool bottom, pool deck and drainage system is carried out immediately after the daily closure of the swimming pools. These arrangements are made to minimize disturbance to swimmers using the pools. However, there is a need to enhance the arrangements and to allow sufficient time for thorough cleansing of the surrounding environment of the pools as well. Moreover, carrying out the bulk of the cleansing work in the evening after the pool closure is not sufficiently effective because of inadequate lighting coverage.

The Weekly Cleansing Programme

5. To enhance the hygiene condition of public swimming pools, the Department has implemented a major cleansing programme for

half-a-day each week at each pool complex on weekday commencing 8 September 2004 which is on top of the daily routine cleansing work. To minimise inconvenience to swimmers, we will close on the same day only one pool complex in each district (when there are more than one pools in the district) or in neighbouring districts (where there is only one pool in each district) so that swimmers will have the alternative choice to go to other pools in the same district or neighbouring district. The pools are closed from 1:00 p.m. till 10:00 p.m. for carrying out thorough cleansing.

6. In addition to the daily cleansing operation as mentioned in paragraph 4 above, intensive cleansing work including cleaning of drainage system manholes, surface channels and the surrounding areas of the swimming pools are carried out during the closure period each week. The above cleansing work will ensure that the whole swimming pool complex including its surrounding environment is completely cleaned to enhance the hygiene conditions of the swimming pools.

7. The current schedule for cleansing operation of the public swimming pools is at the **Annex** while the winter schedule for cleansing operation will be tabled at the meeting.

Feedback from the Users of Public Swimming Pools

8. The weekly cleansing programme is generally well received by the public who appreciate the better hygiene standard of the pools after the implementation of the programme. However, there are suggestions to adjust and shorten the time and duration of the cleansing operation to cater for the needs of individual swimming organisations. The National Sports Associations also express their concern on the loss of training time when the pools are closed for cleansing. We will review the situation in the light of operational experience so that we can enhance the hygiene standard of public swimming pools on the one hand while minimising the impact on swimmers and concerned organisations on the other hand. We will liaise with affected parties to address their concern.

Presentation

9. Members are invited to express views on the cleansing programme of public swimming pools.

Leisure and Cultural Services Department
October 2004

Schedule of Cleansing Operation of Public Swimming Pools

District	Swimming Pool	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Southern	Pao Yue Kong		√			
Central & Western	Kennedy Town					√
Wan Chai	Wan Chai			√		
	Morrison Hill				√	
Eastern	Victoria Park	√				
	Island East			√		
	Chai Wan		√			
Sham Shui Po	Lai Chi Kok Park			√		
	Lei Cheng Uk				√	
	Sham Shui Po Park					√
Yau Tsim Mong	Kowloon Park		√			
Kowloon City	Tai Wan Shan			√		
	Ho Man Tin				√	
	Kowloon Tsai	√				
Wong Tai Sin	Morse Park					√
	Hammer Hill Road		√			
Kwun Tong	Jordan Valley	√				
	Kwun Tong			√		
Islands	Mui Wo					√
Tuen Mun	Tuen Mun				√	
	The Jockey Club Yan Oi Tong		√			
Yuen Long	Yuen Long			√		
	Tin Shui Wai				√	
Tsuen Wan	Tsuen King Circuit Wu Chung	√				
	Shing Mun Valley			√		
Kwai Tsing	Kwai Shing					√
	North Kwai Chung Jockey Club	√				
	Tsing Yi				√	
North	Fanling		√			
	Sheung Shui				√	
Tai Po	Tai Po	√				
Sha Tin	Sha Tin Jockey Club		√			
	Hin Tin				√	
	Ma On Shan					√
Sai Kung	Tseung Kwan O	√				
	Sai Kung			√		