

Adaptation period for new regulation on disposable plastic products to end in two weeks

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) spokesperson said today (October 7) that the six-month adaptation period for the new regulation on disposable plastic products will conclude in two weeks, on October 21.

The EPD reminds all relevant businesses to prepare for the end of the adaptation period. For information on non-plastic alternatives, please visit the EPD's Green Tableware Platform (www.greentableware.hk) or contact the EPD hotline at 2838 3111.

During the past five months of the adaptation period, the new regulation has successfully initiated a trend of waste reduction across various sectors. The catering sector has reported that many takeaway customers have gradually adapted to bringing their own reusable cutlery. Chained restaurants have indicated that approximately 80 per cent of their customers have chosen not to require takeaway cutlery, and about 30 per cent of restaurants no longer provide any takeaway cutlery.

In the retail and services sectors, property management companies have revealed that most people have become accustomed to using umbrella dryers instead of single-use plastic umbrella bags. The use of disposable plastic products, such as plastic balloon sticks, glow sticks, and party hats during festivals, has significantly decreased, with businesses co-operating by switching to selling alternative products.

The hotel sector has reported that the consumption of disposable plastic items since the implementation of the new regulation has been reduced substantially. Many visitors have also expressed support for the new plastic-free measures. The implementation of the new regulation has encouraged habitual changes among both the public and the trades, fostering a new culture of "plastic-free, disposable-free, and green-recycling" at the community level and paving the way towards a new milestone in plastic-free living.

Plastic is widely used and deeply integrated into human life. However, due to its harm to the environment, there is now an international consensus: to achieve sustainable development, humanity must take action to reduce and ultimately eliminate plastic in the long term.

Hong Kong has implemented the new regulation since April 22 this year, aiming to reduce the use of disposable plastic tableware and other disposable plastic products at the source. This initiative seeks to mitigate the impact of plastic pollution on marine ecology and human health, accompanied by publicity and education, with a view to establishing a habit and culture of

being plastic-free in society.