

## **AEON Stores (Hong Kong) Co Limited convicted of not informing customer about its statutory obligation**

AEON Stores (Hong Kong) Co Limited was convicted and fined \$1,200 at Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (September 30) for contravening the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance (PERO) as a result of not informing a customer about its statutory obligation when selling a television set.

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said the department had received a complaint earlier about AEON Stores failing to provide him with a free statutory removal service after the sale of a television set. EPD enforcement officers carried out investigations at the store and discovered that when selling television sets, staff of AEON Stores made a false claim that customers must contact a recycler on their own to recycle their old television sets. In addition, staff of AEON Stores did not inform customers of the sellers' obligation to arrange a statutory removal service as well as the relevant terms. After collecting evidence, the EPD prosecuted AEON Stores for contravening the relevant requirements under the PERO.

The spokesman emphasised that according to the PERO, which came into effect on August 1 last year, when distributing regulated electrical equipment (REE), sellers must have a removal service plan endorsed by the EPD and proactively inform consumers in writing of the sellers' obligation to provide a free statutory removal service as well as the relevant removal terms. Moreover, sellers must arrange a free removal service for consumers to dispose of waste equipment of the same type and provide a recycling label as well as a receipt containing the prescribed wording when distributing REE.

The spokesman reminded all the relevant sellers that they must not make false statements to consumers or deliberately conceal the terms of their statutory removal service with a view to avoiding the relevant legal liabilities. Otherwise, they may contravene the PERO. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$5,000 to \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$10,000 to \$200,000 may be imposed on a subsequent conviction.

The spokesman urged members of the public to make a report to the EPD immediately if they find any seller not conforming to the aforementioned requirements when purchasing the regulated electrical and electronic equipment. The EPD will take strict enforcement actions against sellers who violate the PERO.