

# EPD to develop new waste-to-energy facilities to gradually phase out landfills

The Government set out in the Waste Blueprint for Hong Kong 2035 and Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 the goals of "Zero Landfill" and carbon neutrality. To achieve the goals, Hong Kong needs sufficient waste-to-energy (WtE) facilities to handle municipal solid waste (MSW), together with promoting waste reduction and clean recycling. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) announced today (January 25) the commencement of the planning studies on developing new WtE facilities.

The two existing landfills in Hong Kong receive an average of 11 000 tonnes of MSW in total daily. Regarding the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with waste management, the decomposition of MSW in landfills is the major source. Waste management has therefore become the third major source of GHG emissions locally in recent years. To move away from the reliance on landfills for MSW disposal by around 2035 and to achieve carbon neutrality in waste management before 2050, the Government is not only committed to promoting waste reduction at source and various means of recycling, but also developing sufficient WtE facilities with a view to transforming unavoidable and non-recyclable MSW into resources comprehensively.

A spokesman for the EPD said, "The Integrated Waste Management Facilities Phase 1, I-PARK1, which is now being built near Shek Kwu Chau, will be the first WtE facility that adopts advanced incineration technology to treat MSW in Hong Kong. An air pollution control system that is more stringent than the corresponding European Union standard will be installed in I-PARK1 to ensure that air emissions will not cause adverse impacts to the surrounding environment. I-PARK1 is targeted for commissioning in 2025 with a treatment capacity of 3 000 tonnes of MSW daily. To keep abreast of the times, Hong Kong needs to build more WtE facilities with a view to transforming all unavoidable and non-recyclable waste into resources as well as boosting the portion of electricity generation from WtE sources."

When planning for the development of I-PARK1, the EPD carried out an in-depth study on the middle ash lagoon at Tsang Tsui in Tuen Mun as one of the potential sites under consideration. The EPD will commence in the first half of this year a fresh round of both the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the technical studies for the Tsang Tsui site, with a treatment capacity preliminarily set at around 4 000 tonnes of MSW per day. Also, the department plans to commence a comprehensive territory-wide site search study in parallel to identify other potential sites suitable for developing similar WtE facilities across the territory, followed by the associated EIA and technical studies, with due consideration of geographical location, available land, environmental impacts, waste transportation arrangements, the overall distribution of waste management infrastructure, and more. The modern WtE

facilities will adopt advanced technology and integrate with public amenities or green tourism concepts to maximise synergy through co-locating public facilities that can widely benefit members of the public.

The spokesman said that landfills are still necessary to treat MSW before adequate WtE facilities have been fully commissioned. During this transitional period, the two landfills in the New Territories will be extended to a limited extent. Following an open tender process, Veolia Environmental Services Hong Kong Limited has won the contract to design, build and operate the North East New Territories Landfill extension. The corresponding construction works will commence early this year and more stringent environmental protection measures will be implemented. In addition to real-time monitoring and reporting of a wide range of environmental parameters, a dedicated website will be set up to report the environmental monitoring and auditing data and results to the public. For the West New Territories (WENT) Landfill, the landfill extension area has been significantly reduced by half from around 200 hectares to only around 100 hectares from the original design. The open tender exercise for the WENT extension project will be conducted this year.

The spokesman added that developing MSW treatment infrastructure to transform MSW into resources through waste incineration for generation of electricity forms an integral part of the overall waste management strategies of many advanced cities (the relevant information is tabulated in the Annex). Modern WtE facilities have already been proved as safe, efficient and decarbonising while converting waste into electricity. By complementing the blueprints for environmental protection in waste reduction and decarbonisation, the WtE facilities would support Hong Kong on its way to achieving carbon neutrality before 2050.

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## **Cinemas Subsidy Scheme under fifth round of AEF completes disbursement**

The Cinemas Subsidy Scheme under the fifth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund was open for application from January 18. Operators of all the 64 eligible cinemas have applied, and the relevant subsidies were disbursed today (January 25).

The Scheme seeks to provide a one-off subsidy of \$50,000 per screen to each existing cinema licensed as a place of public entertainment with commercial operation in December 2021. The maximum subsidy for a cinema circuit is \$1.5 million.

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## FSTB and financial regulators to implement "vaccine bubble"

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, today (January 25) said that in line with the "vaccine bubble" arrangement for government employees to be implemented at government buildings and offices from February 16, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau has issued a circular memorandum to all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to direct them that suitable clauses should be incorporated in all service contracts awarded on or after February 16, requiring the contractors, their agents and subcontractors to follow the relevant "vaccine bubble" arrangement.

Same as the "vaccine bubble" arrangement for government employees, save for those who are medically unfit for COVID-19 vaccination as supported by a valid medical certificate or pregnant staff with prior exemption granted on a case-by-case basis, all employees of the service contractors, their agents and subcontractors will be required to present a vaccination record of at least the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine when they enter indoor government premises for work-related purposes.

Mr Hui said, "Extending the 'vaccine bubble' arrangement at government buildings and offices from government employees to service contractors could further fortify the protective barrier, reduce the risk of the spread of mutant strains of COVID-19, and safeguard the health of government employees and members of the public."

Moreover, financial regulators, namely the Insurance Authority, the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority (including the eMPF Platform Company Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Authority) and the Financial Reporting Council will from February 16 implement the "vaccine bubble" arrangement same with that to be adopted at government buildings and offices for their own employees, as well as extending the arrangement to employees of their service contractors. The aforesaid financial regulators will formulate the implementation details at their office buildings and premises according to their actual situations.

Mr Hui said, "The vaccination rate of the employees under various financial regulators is over 90 per cent at present. I strongly believe that as long as everyone works together to set a good example to all walks of life by trying their best to implement the 'vaccine bubble' arrangement, it will surely be conducive to steady economic recovery and resumption of the normal operation of society."

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# First Kindergarten Premises Allocation Exercise 2022 invites applications for six kindergarten premises

The Education Bureau (EDB) announced today (January 25) that six kindergarten premises are open for application by eligible applicant bodies under the First Kindergarten Premises Allocation Exercise 2022. Details of the six kindergarten premises are set out in the Annex.

"The six kindergarten premises include four new estate kindergarten premises, each with six or seven classrooms, located in Tung Chung, North District and Tuen Mun District and to be available in 2022, and one existing estate kindergarten premises with eight classrooms, located in Tai Po District. The EDB is entrusted by the Hong Kong Housing Authority to nominate operators for the kindergarten premises. The sixth kindergarten premises with six classrooms is co-located with a primary school in Sai Kung District and will be available in 2025. The Exercise will be carried out on a competitive basis," a spokesman for the EDB said.

In light of the decline in the kindergarten student population, the existing kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme (Scheme-KGs) are able to provide sufficient places to meet the demand. However, there are differences in the demand and supply of kindergarten places and parents' preferences in various districts. Moreover, under the quality kindergarten education policy, the EDB endeavours to look for suitable sites for kindergartens in need. Kindergartens, especially those facing high rental expenses, dilapidated school environments and facilities, and a surplus of kindergarten places in the district, are encouraged to apply for the above-mentioned kindergarten premises for relocation. The EDB will accord priority to Scheme-KGs applying for relocation. Applications for operating new kindergartens will only be considered if no suitable applicants are found for relocation.

The EDB will assess each application based on the criteria set by the School Allocation Committee (SAC) for selecting suitable applicant bodies. The EDB will provide a template for preparation of the operation plan and will set out the selection criteria endorsed by the SAC in the "Points to Note" for applicant bodies' reference. In short, quality of education is the prime consideration. The EDB will take into account the operation plan of the applicant bodies, the track record of the kindergartens and their needs for relocation (if applicable). The EDB will regularly report to the SAC the results of the kindergarten premises allocation exercises.

The spokesman added, "The EDB launched a two-year Pilot Scheme on Relocation Grant for Kindergartens in August 2020 (for the 2020/21 and

2021/22 school years) to alleviate kindergartens' financial burden in improving the school environment. Each successful applicant will receive a grant of \$1.5 million. In order to further encourage more kindergartens to relocate to government-owned kindergarten premises, the EDB has extended the Relocation Grant to the 2022/23 school year. For details, please refer to EDB Circular Memorandum No. 119/2021."

Applicant bodies should complete the application form and information on the operation plan and submit them together with the relevant supporting documents and a list of operating schools run by the applicant body, if any. When submitting the application, the applicant body should be exempted from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance, and be:

1. Incorporated/will be incorporated under the Companies Ordinance (the successful applicant body would be required to ensure that its articles of association contain all the standard clauses and articles required for allocation of a school premises); or
2. incorporated under other ordinances, with its constitution satisfying the Permanent Secretary for Education as being fit to be considered for allocation of a school premises.

The application form, information on the operation plan, points to note for the First Kindergarten Premises Allocation Exercise 2022 and other reference materials can be downloaded from the EDB homepage at [www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/allocation-of-kg/latest-news.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/allocation-of-kg/latest-news.html).

The duly completed application form, information on the operation plan, list of operating schools run by the applicant body (if any) and supporting documents should reach the Kindergarten Education Division of the EDB (Room 1432, 14/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong) by 5pm on March 3. Late applications will not be accepted.

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## [Exchange Fund Bills tender results](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

Exchange Fund Bills tender results:

Tender date	: January 25, 2022
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: Q2204
Issue date	: January 26, 2022

Maturity date : April 27, 2022  
Amount applied : HK\$166,664 MN  
Amount allotted : HK\$43,484 MN  
Average yield accepted : 0.11 PCT  
Highest yield accepted : 0.13 PCT  
Pro rata ratio\* : About 14 PCT  
Average tender yield : 0.14 PCT

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Tender date : January 25, 2022  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : H2233  
Issue date : January 26, 2022  
Maturity date : July 27, 2022  
Amount applied : HK\$37,082 MN  
Amount allotted : HK\$12,600 MN  
Average yield accepted : 0.21 PCT  
Highest yield accepted : 0.22 PCT  
Pro rata ratio\* : About 57 PCT  
Average tender yield : 0.24 PCT

\*"Pro rata ratio" refers to the average percentage of allotment with respect to each tender participant's tendered amount at the "highest yield accepted" level.

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Hong Kong Monetary Authority tenders to be held in the week beginning January 31, 2022:

Tender date : January 31, 2022  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : Q2205  
Issue date : February 4, 2022  
Maturity date : May 4, 2022  
Tenor : 89 Days  
Amount on offer : HK\$46,982 MN

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Tender date : January 31, 2022  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : H2234  
Issue date : February 4, 2022  
Maturity date : August 3, 2022  
Tenor : 180 Days  
Amount on offer : HK\$11,000 MN