

Bean products factory in Pat Heung convicted for illegal discharge of turbid wastewater into river (with photo)

Ching Yuen Bean Products (HK) Company Limited, located at Chuen Yiu Road in Pat Heung Sheung Tsuen in Yuen Long, illegally discharged untreated industrial wastewater into a nearby river. The company was fined \$58,000 by Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (September 4) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) received a complaint early this year that wastewater was being discharged to the Kam Tin River, causing environmental pollution. The EPD then launched an investigation and targeted the bean products factory concerned. Officers were deployed to monitor the factory in its vicinity at midnight. It was found that turbid and foul-smelling whitish industrial wastewater was discharged from the factory, seriously polluting nearby waters. The EPD conducted a blitz operation at the factory and noted that its wastewater treatment facilities were not operating properly and industrial wastewater was directly discharged into the river. After evidence gathering, the EPD initiated prosecution against Ching Yuen Bean Products (HK) Company Limited in accordance with the WPCO.

The EPD spokesman said that anyone who directly discharges untreated industrial wastewater will pollute nearby waterways and adversely affect public hygiene. The spokesman reminded members of the trade that they should install qualified wastewater treatment facilities and ensure their proper operation to treat wastewater before its discharge to avoid causing environmental pollution.

Under the WPCO, anyone who discharges wastewater into a river commits an offence. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. A maximum fine of \$400,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.

