

China State Construction Engineering convicted for illegal discharge of substandard wastewater at its construction site on Ma On Shan Road

China State Construction Engineering (Hong Kong) Limited (CSCE) was caught illegally discharging substandard wastewater into the communal storm drain at its construction site on Ma On Shan Road. The company was fined \$20,000 by Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (February 26) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO).

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said that during an inspection at a construction site of CSCE on Ma On Shan Road in June last year, the enforcement officers found that muddy water was generated when a worker of the site was washing the wheels of construction vehicles. The muddy water was not properly treated before being discharged directly into the storm drain outside the site. The EPD then collected a muddy water sample for analysis, and the result showed that the concentration of the suspended solids greatly exceeded the statutory limit by about 123 times. The department subsequently prosecuted CSCE in accordance with the WPCO.

The spokesman pointed out that all construction site contractors must install suitable wastewater treatment facilities to collect and treat the wastewater generated in the construction sites. They also have to maintain the effective operation of the facilities to ensure that all discharges meet the relevant standards and prevent them from polluting the river channels, sewers or shorelines.

Under the WPCO, it is an offence for anyone to discharge wastewater into the communal drainage system or a water body. 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 subsequent convictions.