

# Clothing shop convicted for illegally providing free plastic shopping bags

A children's clothing shop was convicted and fined \$2,000 at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (October 31) for contravening the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance (PERO) as a result of providing plastic shopping bags (PSBs) without charging its customers.

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said, during an inspection in April, EPD enforcement officers discovered that a children's clothing shop failed to charge its customers not less than 50 cents for each PSB provided when selling goods in accordance with the PERO. EPD enforcement officers immediately issued a fixed penalty notice to the owner of the shop. This case was subsequently brought to court for handling as the owner denied liability for the offence.

The spokesman reminded all retailers that, according to the PERO, sellers have to charge customers not less than 50 cents for each PSB (including flat-top bag) directly or indirectly provided for the sale of goods, except in situations where there is an exemption. The EPD will issue a fixed penalty notice of \$2,000 to non-compliant shops, or bring disputed cases to court for handling. In addition, the EPD will initiate prosecutions for serious non-compliant cases. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 may be imposed on a subsequent conviction.

The spokesman urged members of the public to immediately make reports to the EPD through the department's hotline (Tel: 2838 3111) or by email ([psb@epd.gov.hk](mailto:psb@epd.gov.hk)) if they discover any shop illegally providing PSBs. The EPD will take strict enforcement action against non-compliant shops.