

## Construction site contractor in Tsim Sha Tsui convicted of discharging substandard wastewater

The contractor of a construction site in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong Construction (General Builders) Limited, was fined \$10,000 by Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (December 12) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO) by discharging substandard wastewater into the communal storm drain and violating the requirements of the wastewater discharge licence.

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) enforcement officers conducted a blitz inspection at the construction site at 15 Middle Road, Tsim Sha Tsui this March and found that the construction site discharged turbid wastewater into the communal storm drain. A wastewater sample was then collected for analysis and the result showed that the concentration of the suspended solids was 300 milligrams/litre, exceeding the relevant licence upper limit by six times. Upon investigation and evidence gathering, the EPD initiated prosecution against the contractor of the construction site involved in accordance with the WPCO.

An EPD spokesman said that discharging muddy water from construction sites into storm drains not only causes drainage blockages and weakens the capability to prevent flooding in the nearby areas, but also affects the environmental hygiene and coastal water quality. Construction site contractors must install suitable wastewater treatment facilities to collect and treat the wastewater generated in the construction sites. They should also maintain effective operation of the facilities to ensure that all discharges comply with the statutory requirements to protect the environment.

According to the Water Pollution Control (General) Regulations, it is an offence for anyone to violate the requirements stipulated in the WPCO licence. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment.