

Construction site contractor in Yau Tong convicted of illegally discharging muddy water

The contractor of a construction site on Tung Yuen Street, Yau Tong, namely Aggressive Civil & Foundation Engineering Limited (Aggressive Foundation), was convicted and fined \$17,000 at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (December 30) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO) by discharging not properly treated wastewater into the waters of the Victoria Harbour Water Control Zone off the construction site.

In April this year, enforcement officers of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) conducted an inspection of Tung Yuen Street as well as its adjacent areas with the aid of a drone. During the inspection, it was found that there was a large area of muddy water in the coastal waters off a construction site on Tung Yuen Street. The enforcement officers thus entered the construction site for an investigation and found that the contractor had discharged wastewater generated by the construction site without proper treatment directly into nearby waters. The enforcement officers immediately collected wastewater samples for analysis and the results showed that the concentration of suspended solids was 1 800 milligrams/litre, greatly exceeding the upper limit of the relevant statutory discharge standards by 35 times. The EPD then initiated prosecution against Aggressive Foundation in accordance with the WPCO.

A spokesman for the EPD pointed out that construction site contractors must install suitable wastewater treatment facilities to collect and properly treat the wastewater generated from construction sites to avoid discharging not properly treated wastewater into Hong Kong waters, impairing inshore water quality and causing an adverse impact on the coastal environment.

Under the WPCO, it is an offence for any person to discharge wastewater into the waters of water control zones. 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.