

Convictions secured in several cases of illegal waste disposal (with photos)

Six persons and a trading company involved in five cases of illegal waste disposal in Sheung Shui, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung and Yuen Long were convicted and fined a total of \$26,000 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (April 2) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) and the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation. In addition to the above cases, five other cases of the same kind are scheduled for hearings in different district courts next week.

From September to November last year, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) successfully traced five cases of illegal waste disposal on government and private land on Kwu Tung Road in Sheung Shui, Tai Chung Road in Tsuen Wan, Chun Pin Street and Lam Tin Street in Kwai Chung, and Sha Kiu Tsuen as well as Wing Kei Tsuen in Yuen Long based on intelligence gathered through various channels, including videos, photos and complaints from members of the public as well as surveillance camera systems installed by the EPD. The offenders included the owner of the vehicle involved, the person-in-charge of the relevant works, a goods vehicle driver and a worker. The waste deposited included wood waste, used wooden boards, construction waste and commercial and industrial (C&I) waste. The waste deposited not only caused obstruction to pedestrians, but also caused environmental hygiene problems. The EPD prosecuted the persons and the company involved under the WDO and the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation after collecting evidence.

An EPD spokesman said the department has installed surveillance camera systems in different districts and has hoisted banners with the slogan "Stop illegal dumping. Someone is watching" with a view to enhancing efforts to combat illegal waste disposal. The department hopes that the above series of successful convictions against illegal waste disposal can strengthen the deterrent effect.

The spokesman also reminded all members of the renovation, construction and transportation sectors, including persons-in-charge of construction sites, workers and drivers as well as owners of goods vehicles, that they must properly deliver construction waste and C&I waste to the government waste management facilities in accordance with the law. Otherwise, they may commit an offence. Under the WDO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. A maximum fine of \$500,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions. According to the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation, it is an offence to dispose of waste on the streets or in public places from vehicles, including goods vehicles, private cars and motorcycles. The registered owner may be prosecuted. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The spokesman urged members of the public to make a report to the department if they witness any illegal disposal of waste. They can record videos or take photos and call the EPD hotline at 2838 3111.

