

DH steps up enforcement against illegal smoking in statutory no smoking areas of shopping malls (with photos)

Tobacco and Alcohol Control officers of the Department of Health (DH) conducted a special operation in shopping malls across the territory for three consecutive days (December 16 to 18), stepping up enforcement against illegal smoking in statutory no smoking areas (NSAs) of shopping malls and prosecution of smoking offenders, as well as enhancing public education through the distribution of leaflets. The officers conducted a total of 155 inspections and issued 36 fixed penalty notices to offenders during the operation.

"To protect public health, it is the Government's tobacco control policy to discourage smoking, contain the proliferation of tobacco use and minimise the impact of second-hand smoke on the public. Stepped-up enforcement actions against smoking offences in shopping malls aim at further protecting the public from the harm of second-hand smoke," a spokesman for the DH said.

Any person who commits an act of smoking in NSAs or in public transport carriers will be liable to a fixed penalty of \$1,500. Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspectors will prosecute smoking offenders without prior warning.

"We appeal to smokers to quit smoking as early as possible for their own health and that of others. They are encouraged to call the DH's Integrated Smoking Cessation Hotline on 1833 183. The hotline is operated by registered nurses, providing professional counselling services on smoking cessation," the spokesman said.

