

E. Tech Management (HK) Limited convicted of improper storage of chemical waste (with photo)

A recycling site operated by E. Tech Management (HK) Limited at the EcoPark in Tuen Mun failed to store chemical waste properly and was convicted and fined \$19,000 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (January 15) for contravening the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation.

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Environmental Protection Department (EPD) staff conducted a surprise inspection last August and found that the recycling site operated by E. Tech Management (HK) Limited at the EcoPark in Tuen Mun did not properly handle waste printed circuit boards (PCBs), which are classified as chemical waste. After investigation and evidence collection, it was confirmed that the recycling site concerned used non-compliant containers and failed to seal chemical waste properly. The chemical waste containers were not labelled and were stored in an improper place without displaying a warning sign. The department subsequently prosecuted E. Tech Management (HK) Limited for contravening the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation.

The EPD spokesman explained that waste PCBs are chemical waste and, if not properly handled, will pollute the environment and pose a risk to the health of relevant trade practitioners and the general public.

The EPD reminds operating companies of recycling sites that they should strictly comply with the relevant law on the control of chemical waste. They should register with the EPD in accordance with the law if they produce chemical waste. Chemical waste must be properly packaged, labelled and stored, as well as collected by licensed chemical waste collectors for delivery to licensed chemical waste disposal facilities for disposal. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. For subsequent offences, offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman also reminded practitioners in the recycling industry that the disposal licensing control, import and export control and disposal bans at designated waste disposal facilities of regulated electrical and electronic equipment (REE) (including waste air-conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, computers, printers, scanners and monitors) under the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) came into effect on December 31, 2018. Unless with exemptions, any person who is engaged in the storage, treatment, reprocessing or recycling (but not repair) of waste REE must obtain a waste disposal licence (e-WDL) issued by the EPD under the law. A permit issued by the EPD is also required for the import and export of waste REE.

