

EPD collaborates with different sectors to launch MSW charging trial projects and community involvement projects

To encourage waste reduction and recycling and enable the community to prepare for the implementation of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) is partnering with 19 organisations to launch trial projects in four sectors, namely public housing estates, rural areas, shopping malls and the catering trade, to allow participants to get first-hand experience of the quantity-based charging arrangements.

Speaking at a launch ceremony for the trials today (November 12), the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, said that while MSW charging sits at the centre of the Government's overall waste reduction strategy, publicity, public education and stakeholders' participation hold the key to the implementation of MSW charging. Therefore, the Government is proactively strengthening collaboration with stakeholders from different sectors in launching trial projects so as to enhance the public understanding of waste charging and encourage the community to practise waste reduction and recycling.

Mr Wong said, "The trials will commence this month and will last for 10 to 12 months and involve over 120 premises. Mindful that participants may face different circumstances in different premises even in the same sector, we have selected a variety of premises to take part in the trial projects." He thanked the partnering organisations for their co-operation and support for launching the trial projects.

The EPD will provide the participating premises with designated garbage bags of different sizes and designs for free to try out the charging arrangements. The EPD will also review the supportive arrangements on waste reduction and recycling at participating premises and provide them with recycling bins on a needs basis. During the trials, various publicity and public education activities will be organised to enrich participants' understanding of the waste charging scheme, source separation of waste and clean recycling, and to encourage all sectors to value resources and reduce waste in order to "dump less, save more".

For more details about the trial projects, please visit the EPD's website on MSW charging at www.mswcharging.gov.hk.

In addition, today's event also heralded the launch of the fourth batch of MSW charging community involvement projects funded by the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF).

Mr Wong pointed out that although community involvement projects are voluntary in nature and do not involve actual charging, the waste disposal rate of participating premises from around 30 completed projects dropped by about 10 per cent, while the amount of recyclables collected by the participating premises increased by about 20 per cent. He said that he expects the actual waste reduction upon the implementation of MSW charging will be even greater.

The funding scheme for community involvement projects on MSW charging has attracted applications from various non-profit-making organisations and bodies since 2015. Among the applications, more than 80 projects have been approved, involving total funding support of around \$75 million and covering over 700 different premises, including residential estates, single-block buildings, commercial and industrial premises, rural areas, public institutions and community service units. The 28 approved projects under the fourth batch of community involvement projects, involving 286 different premises and total funding of around \$23 million, will commence in the first quarter of 2019. The application period for the fifth batch of projects will also start in the same period and the projects will commence from the end of 2019 to early 2020.

For more details of community involvement projects, please visit the ECF's website at www.ecf.gov.hk/tc/home/index.html.

Other officiating guests at today's MSW Charging – Launching Ceremony for Trial Projects and 4th Batch of Community Involvement Projects included member of the Panel on Environmental Affairs of the Legislative Council Mr Tony Tse; the Chairman of the Advisory Council on the Environment, Mr Stanley Wong; and the Deputy Chairman of the Advisory Council on the Environment, Professor Nora Tam.