

# EPD detects illegal import and storage of hazardous electronic waste by importer (with photos)

YCHANG (HK) Limited illegally imported and stored waste printed circuit boards (PCBs), which are classified as chemical waste. The company was convicted and fined a total of \$21,000 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (January 29) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) and the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation (the Regulation).

With the assistance of the Customs and Excise Department, enforcement officers of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) intercepted an imported container from Shanghai at the Kwai Chung Container Terminals in July last year. The container was claimed to contain computer parts, but upon inspection was found to be loaded with a batch of hazardous electronic waste (e-waste) comprising waste PCBs. The EPD immediately sent back the intercepted container to its place of origin and notified the relevant Mainland authority to follow up. The department also instigated prosecution against the importer in accordance with the WDO.

During the investigation of the above case, the EPD also successfully traced a recycling site in Fanling operated by that company. It was found that the site illegally stored waste PCBs, which are classified as chemical waste. The total weight of the waste PCBs was about 2 tonnes, with a market value of about \$200,000. After evidence gathering, the EPD also laid additional relevant charges against the importer concerned in accordance with the Regulation.

An EPD spokesman stressed that waste PCBs, LCD monitors and cathode ray tubes are hazardous e-waste, containing heavy metals and other toxic chemical substances. They are classified as chemical waste and must be properly handled. Otherwise, they will pollute the environment and pose a risk to the health of relevant trade practitioners and the general public. The EPD will continue to combat the illegal collection, storage, disposal or import of hazardous e-waste by recycling sites. 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.

Members of the public may visit the EPD's website for more information about the control of chemical waste:

[www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide\\_ref/guide\\_cwc.html](http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/guide_cwc.html).

