

EPD distributes rapid antigen tests kits to personnel of refuse collection and recycling trade (with photos)

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (March 4) said that the department has distributed a total of about 80 000 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits to drivers of refuse collection vehicles using the services at landfills and refuse transfer stations, staff of landfill and refuse transfer station contractors, and various recycling and waste collection trade associations and recycling service contractors. The department called for the concerted efforts of these frontline personnel to safeguard the health of themselves and their families by undergoing testing on a voluntary basis and fighting the virus together.

"Waste and recyclable treatment is an essential public service. The EPD thanked the frontline staff concerned for continuing to relentlessly provide the service amid the epidemic. The department distributed RAT kits to them through the trade for them to undergo testing in the hope of identifying infected persons early, so as to better protect the infected persons and their families," the EPD spokesman said.

The refuse collection vehicles collect municipal solid waste from various districts in Hong Kong and transport the waste in an orderly manner to refuse transfer stations or directly to landfills for disposal. In view of the epidemic situation, the EPD had distributed earlier about 15 000 RAT kits to drivers of refuse collection vehicles using the services at landfills and refuse transfer stations, as well as staff of landfill and refuse transfer station contractors, for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identify infected persons.

The recycling trade practitioners collect and handle different recyclable materials or waste from various districts in Hong Kong every day. The EPD has distributed about 20 000 RAT kits since last week to various recycling service contractors and recycling trade associations for members' distribution to frontline personnel. The EPD is also distributing about 45 000 RAT kits to frontline employees of operators of waste-to-resources and waste-to-energy facilities (such as O·PARK1 and WEEE·PARK, as well as some 10 Recycling Stations and some 20 Recycling Stores under the Community Recycling Network GREEN@COMMUNITY) for them to undergo testing for early identification of infected persons to help cut the silent transmission chains of COVID-19.

The spokesman said that with the staunch support of the Central Government, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is making all-out efforts to fight the epidemic. The EPD will work closely with the trade to provide essential public service to the public while protecting the health of personnel.

