

[EPD successfully intercepts two cases of import of hazardous waste by air and by sea \(with photos\)](#)

Following convictions in three similar cases in early June this year, there have been two more convictions for illegal import of hazardous waste. The shipments, from the United Arab Emirates and Thailand, were intercepted at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) and the Kwai Chung Container Terminals (KCCT). The two importers involved, namely Uniall Trading International Limited and Everywhere Transportation Limited, were convicted at Eastern Magistrates' Courts and Fanling Magistrates' Courts yesterday (June 24) and today (June 25) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) and fined a total of \$28,000.

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has all along been striving to intercept hazardous waste entering Hong Kong illegally through different channels. In addition, the department has been proactively strengthening the co-operation and exchange of intelligence with the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED). With the assistance of the C&ED, the EPD intercepted a batch of air cargoes and two sea containers at HKIA and the KCCT respectively in December last year. The air cargoes and the sea containers were claimed to include computer parts, used photocopier parts and more. After inspection, they were found to be loaded with hazardous waste, including waste printed circuit boards and waste toner cartridges, with a total market value of about \$150,000. The EPD immediately returned the intercepted hazardous waste to the places of origin and notified the local enforcement authorities concerned about the return shipments. The department also instigated prosecutions against the two importers under the WDO.

An EPD spokesman stressed that waste printed circuit boards are hazardous electronic waste containing various heavy metals and other toxic chemical substances. They are classified as chemical waste and are regulated under the laws on chemical waste disposal. Improper handling of hazardous waste, including waste toner cartridges, will also cause harm to the environment and public health. The EPD will continue to rigorously combat the illegal import and export of hazardous waste, bring offenders to justice and prevent Hong Kong from becoming a distribution hub for illegally imported and exported waste.

The spokesman reminded importers of the waste recycling trade not to illegally import (including import into or transshipment through Hong Kong) or export hazardous waste. According to the WDO, it is an offence for anyone to import or export hazardous waste without obtaining a valid permit beforehand. 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.

For more information about the control of chemical waste, please visit

the EPD's website:

www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/guide_cwc.html.

