

FEHD attaches importance to safety of refuse chutes in its public markets

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (June 21) that following its earlier inspection of all refuse chutes installed in its public markets, the FEHD has co-operated with the relevant department to complete improvement works progressively targeting refuse chute openings that need to be improved, with a view to safeguarding the work safety of tenants and cleansing workers using the refuse chutes.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The FEHD has all along attached great importance to the work safety and arrangements on occupational safety and health of tenants as well as staff members of the department or its contractors. Since March this year, the FEHD, with the relevant department, has inspected a total of 54 refuse chutes in 48 public markets under the department, and conducted targeted risk assessments. After fully taking into account factors such as the site situation, position and size of the refuse chute openings, 36 refuse chute openings that need to be improved were identified."

The spokesman said, "The FEHD then worked with the relevant department to formulate safe work methods in accordance with the requirements of safety guidelines, and conducted improvement works targeting refuse chute openings such as installing hoppers or reducing the size of the openings, and sealing the openings of certain refuse chutes permanently that were no longer in use, so as to minimise the risk of accidents for workers. All relevant works have been completed by mid-June."

Moreover, the FEHD has deployed staff to conduct daily inspection of its markets to ensure that the outsourced service contractors responsible for public market management and cleansing services comply with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance and provide occupational safety and health training to their staff. Earlier on, the FEHD has issued letters to the contractors, reminding them to ensure the safety and health of their staff during work.

The spokesperson reiterated that the FEHD attaches great importance to the occupational safety and health of tenants and staff members of the department or its contractors. The FEHD will continue to collaborate with the stakeholders and contractors to provide a safe working environment.